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ITALY.

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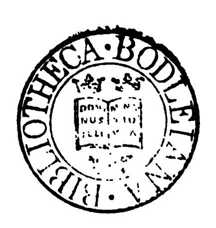
H. TAINE.

NAPLES AND ROME.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH

BY

J. DURAND.



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INTRODUCTION.

To M——, at Paris.

January 15, 1864.

Do you know anything more disagreeable than an *entr'acte*? * You sit uneasily in your chair and stretch your limbs and yawn discreetly. Your eyes ache; wandering about the house, they fix themselves for the hundredth time on the jaded features of the musicians: on the first violinist showing himself off, on the clarionette player taking breath, and on the patient basso resembling a hack horse resting after a relay. You turn round to the boxes, and over snowy shoulders perceive a big black spot, an enormous lorgnette, which like a huge proboscis seems to conceal the face behind it. A thick deleterious atmosphere hangs over the crowded parterre and orchestra; through the cloud of illuminated dust you detect a multitude of uneasy faces grimacing and smiling hypocritically; —bad humour reveals itself beneath politeness and decorum. You buy a newspaper and find it stupid. You even read the libretto which is still more stupid, and finally, grumble *quietly* to yourself that your evening

* The interval between the acts of a play in French theatres.

is lost, the *entr'acte* being so much more tedious than the play is amusing.

There are an infinity of *entr'actes* in travelling. These are the dull hours of the day—getting up, going to bed, waiting at stations, between visits, and when you are weary and indifferent. At such times you look at things on the dark side. There is but one remedy, and that is a pencil and taking notes.

You must regard this as a journal * with some of its pages missing, and moreover, entirely personal. I do not pretend that what pleases me will please you, and still less that it will please others. Heaven preserve us from legislators in matters of beauty, pleasure, and emotion! What each one feels is peculiar and appropriate to himself like his nature; my experiences will depend upon what I am.

Apropos to this, I must begin with somewhat of self-examination; it is prudent to inspect an instrument before making use of it. According to my own experience this instrument, call it what you will, whether soul or intellect, derives greater pleasure from natural objects than from works of art; nothing seems to it to equal mountains, seas, forests, and streams. It has always shown the same disposition in other things, in poetry as in music, in architecture as in painting; that which has most deeply impressed it is the natural spontaneous outflow of human forces, whatever these may be and under whatever form

* The reader will bear in mind the political changes that have occurred in Italy, since this work was written, and, notably, the removal of the French troops from Rome. By so doing, certain allusions and opinions (for instance, on pages 65 and 308) will not seem out of place.—Tr.

they present themselves. Provided the artist is stirred by a profound passionate sentiment, and desires only to express this fully, as it animates him, without hesitation, feebleness, or reservation, the end is served; if sincere and sufficiently master of his processes to translate his impressions accurately and completely, his work, whether ancient or modern, gothic or classic, is beautiful. In this respect it is a brief abstract of public sentiment, of the dominant passion of the hour and country in which it is born; itself a natural work, the result of the mighty forces that guide or stimulate the conflict of human activities.

This instrument thus fashioned has been roaming through history, especially among literary works, and also a long time among works of art,—those only which through their strong relief hand down to posterity the being, forms, and personality of man through the engravings and museums of France, Belgium, Holland, England, and Germany. Taking a comparative view of its impressions, first and above all come the heroic or ungovernable forces, that is to say, the colossal types of Michael Angelo and Rubens; then the beauty of the voluptuousness and joyous feeling of the Venetian decorative art; and then in the same, if not to a greater degree, the tragic and piercing sentiment of truth, the intensity of a suffering visionary imagination, the bold transcripts of human squalor and misery, and the poesy of a misty northerly light in the works of Rembrandt.

This is the instrument I now bear with me into Italy; this is the colour of its lens; that colouring is to be taken into account in the descriptions given. I distrust it

somewhat myself and have endeavoured to provide other lenses as occasion calls for them, which is possible, inasmuch as education, history, and criticism furnish the means for so doing. Through reflection, study and habit we succeed by degrees in producing sentiments in our minds of which we were at first unconscious; we find that another man in another age of necessity felt differently from ourselves; we enter into his views, and then into his tastes, and as we place ourselves at his point of view comprehend him, and, in comprehending him, find ourselves a little less superficial.

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BOOK I.

Errata.

Page 7, line 3, *for* gorze *read* gorse.
" 21, " 14, " but under " but only under.
" 23, " 16, " appears " appear.
" 76, " 17, " escapes " escape.
" 124, " 9, " Lysistrate " Lysistratus.
" 172, " 4 from bottom, *for* Trivulce *read* Trivulzio.
" 207, " 8 " " " Marc-Antoine *read* Mark Antony.
" 210, " 1, *for* kind *read* kinds.
" 224, " 9 from bottom, *for* Canealetti *read* Canaletti.
" 251, " 1, *for* is *read* are.
" 269, " 8, " Penubo " Piombo.
" 294, " 21, " pours " pour.

where the pale olive and the almond-tree find shelter for their meagre stems. Colour is wanting; it is a pure, delicate, elegant drawing, like a background of Perugino's. The country is not unlike a grey striped uniform carpet; but the mild pale sun yields genial light from the blue above, and a gentle breeze flutters about the cheeks like a caress. This is not winter, but rather an anticipation of summer.

ITALY.

BOOK I.

THE ROUTE AND THE ARRIVAL.

CHAPTER I.

MARSEILLES AND PROVENCE—THE SEA—CIVITA VECCHIA.

Marseilles and Provence. — A southern landscape already—it begins with the Cevennes. A northern soil is always moist and sombre; even in winter the fields remain green: here all is grey and neutral; the mountains are bare, the rocks are white, and the broad plains dry and stony; scarcely any trees are visible, save on the slopes and in the hollows strewed with boulders, where the pale olive and the almond-tree find shelter for their meagre stems. Colour is wanting; it is a pure, delicate, elegant drawing, like a background of Perugino's. The country is not unlike a grey striped uniform carpet; but the mild pale sun yields genial light from the blue above, and a gentle breeze flutters about the cheeks like a caress. This is not winter, but rather an anticipation of summer.

Suddenly all the magnificences of the south appear: the Étang de Berre, a glittering blue pool, motionless in its cup of white mountains; then the sea, extending into infinity, with its broad, placid, radiant surface, as lustrous and delicate in colour as the most charming violet or a blooming periwinkle. All around arise striated mountains, seeming to glow with seraphic splendour, so much light is there about them—a light so imprisoned within their recesses by distance and atmosphere, as apparently to enrobe them. A conservatory flower in a marble vase—the pearly veins of an orchis with the pale velvet on the margin of its leaves, and the purple pollen slumbering in its calyx—has not a tenderer or more vivid hue.

In the evening, along the margin of the sea, a gentle breeze cooled our brows; the odour of green trees diffused itself on all sides like a summer perfume; the transparent water resembled a liquid emerald; the scarcely visible mountain forms, half lost in obscurity, and the grand lines of the coast, were always imposing, while on the horizon a glowing band of orange revealed the magnificence of sunset.

On board at ten o'clock.—This quiet port, this broad glittering black basin, is striking. Its dark masts and rigging furrow it with lines still darker. Three lanterns glimmer in the distance like stars, their long train of light trembling on the water like a necklace of pearls unrolling itself. The vessel glides from its moorings slowly like a colossal saurian, or some snorting antediluvian monster, while the water swells and heaves in its wake, as if disturbed by the monstrous fins and webbed feet of some gigantic frog. The screw beneath bores the sea indefatigably with its flanges, and the ship trembles in every limb. This powerful monotonous plunging continues all night, suggesting an enslaved plesiosaurus substituted for the labour of man.

At sea.—The weather this morning is calm, mild, and misty. The little crested waves stud the slaty fog with brightness; dripping clouds hang around the four corners of the horizon. What beauty a gleam of sunshine would impart to this dull velvety surface! I have seen this sky and sea in their summer splendour. Words can feebly express the beauty of the boundless azure expanding on all sides into infinite space! What a contrast when compared with the dangerous and lugubrious Atlantic! This sea might be compared to a happy beautiful girl, robed in lustrous silk fresh from the loom. Blue, radiant blue; blue above and blue below, and extending to the very verge of the horizon, with fringes of silver here and there dotting its moving gloss. One became Pagan again on feeling the piercing glance, the virile energy, the serenity of the magnificent sun, the great god of air. How he triumphed above us! How he launched his handfuls of arrows on this immense waste! How the waves flashed and quivered beneath this fiery hail! One thought of the Nereids, of the sounding conchs of Tritons, of blonde dishevelled tresses, and white bodies streaming with foam. The heart seemed to be again stirred with the ancient religion of beauty and joyousness on thus encountering the landscape and climate that nourished it.

Ever the same humid gloomy sky. The sea rolls slowly, half red and half blue, reflecting that dark purple hue so often seen in deep slate quarries. Occasionally the sun glimmers through the clouds, and illuminates a portion of the distance.

Towards evening snowy peaks come in sight, then a long range of mountains, and, as we near these, the rugged embossed slopes of the brown coast of Corsica. This coast is grand on account of its simplicity, but such nudity is sterile. Involuntarily one recites Homer's verses on the 'Ocean infecund and indomitable.' This

grand wild element is valueless; man cannot tame it, subdue it, or accommodate it to his usages.

Civita Vecchia. — The vessel comes to anchor. Through the grey dawn a round mole suddenly appears, and then a crenelated line of buildings, and flat red roofs clearly defined above the tranquil surface. Seaward a sailing vessel approaches, careening over on its side like a soaring bird. This is all—two or three black lines on a light background, with the freshness of the sea and the morning—and you have a marine pencil-sketch by some great master.

On entering the town the impression changes; it is a squalid city, made up of infected lanes and public buildings, displaying the vulgarity and plainness of the uses to which they are applied. Some of these lanes are about five feet wide, and the houses lean against each other, supported by transverse beams. No sunshine ever finds its way into them; the mud is like glue. An entrance sometimes consists of an old mediæval construction, with a portal and a sort of embrasure. You advance hesitatingly into this den; on either side are dark holes, where filthy children, girls with tangled hair, are drawing on stockings, and hurriedly trying to fasten on their rags. No sponge has ever touched the window-panes, nor a broom the stairs; they are fairly impregnated with human filth; it oozes out; and a sour putrescent odour greets the nostrils. Many of the windows seem to be crumbling, and disjointed steps cling around leprous walls. In the cross streets, strewed with mire, orange-peel and garbage, a few shops lower than the pavement expose yawning apertures with various phantoms moving about in them; a butcher displaying bloody meat and quarters of veal on his stall; a fruiterer looking like a ferocious bravo; a big, dirty, brazen-faced monk, with his hands on his paunch, laughing vociferously; a tinker nobly draped, and as grave

and proud as a prince, besides various expressive figures standing about, many of them handsome, almost all energetic and gesticulating like actors, often with a sort of comic gaiety and extreme readiness in assuming grotesque attitudes. The French on board our vessel, some twenty young soldiers, are much more amiable-looking and less demonstrative, they being of a less vigorous and finer race.

Here lived poor Stendhal for so long a period, ever with his eyes turned towards Paris. 'It is my misfortune,' he wrote, 'to find nothing here to excite thought. What diversion can I find among five thousand Civita Vecchia traders! There is nothing poetic here but the twelve hundred convicts, whom I cannot possibly take into my society.* The women have but one idea, which is to get their husbands, if possible, to present them with a French bonnet.' A friend of Stendhal, an archæologist, who under this title passed for a Liberal, for twenty years has been unable to obtain permission to stay three hours at Rome.

Here and there, in the streets and squares, southern life is visible. Tinkers and travelling shoemakers are at work in the open air. Barefooted little scamps, with begrimed mouths, are playing cards in crazy carts. At the angle of a foul alley, under a lamp, sits a Madonna, in the midst of wax-candles, flowers, crowns, and painted hearts, smiling under a glass case, and honoured with the sign of the cross by all who pass her. Two fishermen arrive with three baskets, and improvise a market, when immediately twenty curious figures assemble around them as if at a spectacle, all smoking and gesticulating, while a threadbare class carry off fish in their handkerchiefs. A number of ragged vagabonds, and tall wags draped in

* The Roman State prison for criminals, the bagnio, is situated at Civita Vecchia.

brown and black mantles, hang about the street-corners, inhaling the steam of frying-pans, and contemplating the sea. Certainly for the last ten years they must have slept on the ground in their clothes—imagine their tint, while their toes project outside their worn-out shoes. Their pantaloons have evidently passed through five or six colours, from light to dark, from grey to black, from black to brown, and from brown to yellow; and so full of holes and so often patched are they, one would scarcely know where to find a more composite object. They, however, are indifferent. They saunter about philosophically, like sages and epicureans, living as they best can, feeding their senses on beautiful objects, and diverting themselves with idle conversation, leaving all work to blockheads. At the landing-place an hour and a half was consumed in registering twenty-five trunks; out of six men employed, two worked, while the rest looked on and talked. It was necessary to make a show of anger, in order to expedite matters. There was no order whatever. A trunk passed quickly through their hands proportionately to the rude tone of voice in which the owner pronounced *bestiâ*. The more bountiful and beautiful Nature is the less is man compelled to be active and neat. A Hollander, or a peasant of the Black Forest, would feel miserable in a house not clean and agreeable to him; here labour and tidiness are superfluous, Nature taking it upon herself to provide both comfort and beauty.

From Civita Vecchia to Rome.—We pass along the borders of the sea, stretching away, smooth and of a deep blue, into illimitable space, and with a feeble monotonous murmur; to the right, for leagues ahead, an unbroken line of foam forms a broad white fringe on the sand. The same great veil of mist still overhangs the Campagna.

To the left, hills rise and fall and succeed each other, covered with delicate tints of faded green, as if

softened with a brush. There are no trees on them that could be called such, but shrubs like the broom, juniper, mastic, gorze, and other evergreens. All this is a desert: scarcely during the entire journey do we see more than an occasional farmhouse at long intervals by the side of a hollow. Streams descend in tortuous beds, and discharge themselves in pools, which, repelled by the sea, render the country unhealthy and hostile to man. A few horses and some black long-horned cattle graze on the slopes: one might imagine himself on the *landes* of Gascony. From time to time a wood of tall, grey, denuded trees appears by the side of the cars as melancholy-looking as so many invalids.

Here at last is the Campagna of Rome, consisting of bare hills, without trees or shrubs, and a waste of decayed and sun-burnt vegetation; no aqueducts yet—nothing to break up the lugubrious monotony. Now we come to gardens, and hedges of blackthorn tied together with large white reeds, vegetable plots, domes on the horizon, an old brick rampart and blackened bastions, then a long aqueduct like an immense wall, and Santa Maria Maggiore with its two domes and campanile. At the station is a crowd of cab-drivers, guides, and conductors, hooting and appropriating to themselves your baggage and person by main force; also a moving throug of anomalous faces—English, American, German, French, and Russian—crowding and pushing each other, and obtaining information in all sorts of accents and dialects. On the way to the hotel, things look as they do in a provincial town—neglected, irregular, odd, and dirty, with narrow, muddy streets lined with rickety tenements and attics, greasy cooking going on in the open air, clothes drying on ropes, lofty monumental edifices with trellised windows and huge gratings and crossbars bolted together and multiplied, giving one an idea of prisons and fortresses.

CHAPTER II.

ROME—THE COLOSSEUM—ST. PETER'S—A NIGHT PROMENADE—THE FORUM—FROM ROME TO NAPLES—TYPICAL CHARACTERS.

HAVING one day in Rome, I determined to see the Colosseum and St. Peter's. It is certainly unwise to note our first impressions, but since we have them, why not do so? A traveller should regard himself as a thermometer, and, right or wrong, I shall do to-morrow as I do to-day.

First, as to the Colosseum. All that I saw from my cab windows was repulsive—infected streets, wet and dry linen suspended on ropes, old oozing tenements blackened and disfigured with slimy secretions, heaps of offal, shops and tattered costumes; and all this in a drizzling rain. The ruins, the churches, the palaces, visible on the way, the entire accumulations of antiquity, seemed to me like an embroidered coat made two centuries ago, but nevertheless two hundred years old; that is to say, tarnished, faded, full of holes, and infested with human vermin.

The Colosseum appears, and there is a sudden revulsion, a veritable shock; it is grand—nothing grander could be imagined. The interior is quite deserted; profound silence reigns: nothing but masses of stone, pendant vines, and from time to time the cry of a bird. One is content to remain silent and motionless. The eye wanders repeatedly over the three vaulted stories, and

the enormous wall projecting above them. This then, you say to yourself, was a circus ; on these graded seats sat a hundred and seven thousand spectators, yelling, applauding, and threatening simultaneously; five thousand animals were slain, and ten thousand combatants contended in this arena. You gather from this some idea of Roman life.

All this provokes hatred of the Romans. No people have more abused man; of all the European races none have been so destructive: only in oriental countries do we find similar despots and devastators. Here was a monstrous city, as extensive as London now is, deriving its pleasure from spectacles of murder and suffering; for one hundred days, three consecutive months and more, the people resorted here daily to delight in pain and death. The distinctive trait of Roman life, first a triumph and next the arena, is here revealed. They had conquered a hundred nations, and found it natural to turn their victims to account.

Such a regimen necessarily developed an extraordinary state of things, physical and mental. There was no labour: the people were supported by public distributions; they lived in indolence, promenaded a city of marble, were shampooed in baths, gazed on mimes and actors, and for amusement flocked to the contemplation of wounds and death. This was their excitement, and they devoted days to it. St. Augustine experienced the terrible attraction, and has described it; everything contrasted with it seemed insipid; people could not tear themselves away from it. After a certain time humanity, through these compound habits of artists and executioners, lost its equilibrium; extraordinary monsters were developed, and not merely sanguinary brutes and cool assassins, as in the middle ages, but refined amateurs, *dilettanti*, like Caligula, Commodus, and Nero; morbid inventors,

ferocious poets, who, instead of writing out or painting their phantasies, practised them. Many artists in modern times resemble these, but fortunately they confine themselves to the blackening of paper. Then, as now, extreme civilisation produced extreme tension and insatiable desires. The first four centuries after Christ may be regarded as experience on a grand scale, in which the mind systematically sought excessive sensation. Everything below that was wearisome.

When the gladiator from the centre of the arena looked around at the hundred thousand faces, and saw the upturned thumbs demanding his death, what a sensation! It was annihilation, without pity or reprieve. The antique world here reaches its culminating point, the uncontested, unpunished, irremediable rule of force. As these spectacles abounded throughout the Roman empire, it is intelligible how the universe with such machinery became a blank. Hence, and by contrast, the existence of Christianity.

One turns and looks again. The beauty of the edifice consists in its simplicity. Its continuous line of arches forms the most natural and the firmest of props. The edifice is self-supporting, immovable; how much superior to a Gothic cathedral, with its flying buttresses like the claws of a crab! The Roman was satisfied with his idea, and did not require to adorn it; an amphitheatre for a hundred thousand men and enduring indefinitely was enough. Here, as in his inscriptions and despatches, he suppresses all pomposity.* The fact proclaims itself loudly, and is understood by him alone. In this consists his grandeur; it is actions and not words—a sort of haughty calm self-confidence, a serene pride in, and consciousness of, being able to do and to bear more than other men.

* See the reply of the Senate to the King of Illyria, after the victory of Pydna (Livy).

The Romans, however, have always lacked a sentiment of justice and humanity, and not alone in antiquity, but also in the Renaissance, and in the middle ages. They have always comprehended country after the manner of the ancients, namely, as a compact league, useful in oppressing others, and in turning them to profit. Moreover, in the middle ages, their country was nothing but an arena, in which the strong, through craft and violence, sought to enslave the rest. A certain cardinal, on passing from Italy into France, remarked that if Christianity was to be known by evidences of kindness, courtesy, and confidence, the Italians were not one half as Christian as the French. This same objection always arises in my own mind on reading Stendhal, their great admirer, and whom I so greatly admire. You laud their energy, their good sense, their genius; you agree with Alfieri that the plant man is born more vigorous in Italy than elsewhere; you go no further; it seems as if this was a complete eulogy, and that nothing more desirable for a race could be imagined. This is isolating man as artists and naturalists do in order to contemplate a fine, powerful, redoubtable animal, and a bold, expressive attitude. The complete man, however, is man in society, and who developes himself therein; hence the superior race is that disposed to social intercourse and to progress. In this view gentleness, social instincts, the chivalrous sentiment of honour, phlegmatic good sense, and rigid, puritanical self-consciousness are precious gifts, and perhaps the most precious of all. These are the qualities which, beyond the Alps, have formed societies and an order of development; it is the lack of these qualities which, on this side of the Alps, has prevented the consolidation of societies, and hindered development. A certain instinct of willing subordination is an advantage in a nation, and, at the same time, a defect in an individual; and perhaps

it is this power of the individual which has here closed the avenue to nationality.

In the centre of the arena is a cross. A man in a blue coat, a *demi-bourgeois*, approaches it in the midst of the silence, removes his hat, folds his green umbrella, and devotedly imprints several fervent kisses on it. Each kiss is attended with a hundred days' indulgence.

The sky was now getting clear. Through the arcades you might see green slopes, lofty ruins decked with shrubbery, shafts of columns, trees, heaps of rubbish, a field of tall white reeds, the Arch of Constantine placed obliquely—all forming a singular combination of cultivation and neglect. One encounters this everywhere in traversing Rome—remains of monuments, pieces of gardens, messes of potatoes frying at the bases of antique columns, near the bridge of Horatius Cocles the odour of old codfish, and on the flanks of a palace, three cobblers plying their awls, or perhaps a bed of artichokes.

One loiters along, leisurely and indifferently. I have no *cicerone*—a way to see nothing and be deafened. I ask my way of a respectable-looking man, who is very obliging, and enters into conversation with me. He has been to Paris, and admires the Place de la Concorde and the Arc de l'Étoile, and has visited Mabille, of which his souvenirs are very profound. Photographs of the illustrious dancers and lorettes of Paris abound in the shop-windows. I find that these ladies everywhere in foreign lands constitute our principal reputation. 'Ah, how pleasant France is, and how delightful to promenade the Boulevart Montmartre!'

The sky had now become perfectly clear, the atmosphere warm, and the ground dry. From the café in which I breakfasted (I have forgotten where), I could observe about forty droll characters seated on the side-walk, or leaning against the angles of the houses, doing nothing,

some smoking, and others strolling up and down, and exchanging comments on the weather, and on passers-by. Three or four, with their bare knees shining through their rags, as dirty as old brooms, lay flat on the stones against a wall, sleeping. Half a dozen, the most active, were playing *morra*, opening and shutting the hand, and vociferously calling the number of fingers closed or extended. Most of them sat silent and motionless. Seated in a row on the edge of the kerbstone, with their hands supporting their chins, and their blankets drawn about their thighs, they seemed content to be comfortably warm and ask no more. Some, the voluptuaries, were chewing lupines, and, save the masticating motion of their jaws, remained an hour and more without moving a muscle.

Throughout the entire length of the street the windows are open, and women and young girls show themselves on the balconies, and take the air. You cannot imagine a more curious contrast than these usually handsome creatures, with vigorous expressive heads, dark lustrous hair carefully gathered above the temples, brilliant eyes, ruddy, glowing, healthy complexions, clean clothes, gilded comb, chains and trinkets, and all framed in by the wall of a hovel. Its plaster is cracked, and broken, and spattered with mud, which also runs black along the entire street. If you approach it, you find a low entrance, its unfastened bars dripping with cobwebs, and a stairway winding around like the gallery of a coal-pit; and in the interior all kinds of domestic disorder—piles of clothes, earthenware pots, and children scattered about with nothing on them but shirts. These women are by no means disreputable, but all they care for is to dress and pass away the afternoon on their balconies like peacocks on their perches.

At the end of a long street, the church of St. Peter discloses itself. Nothing can be more truly and substantially beautiful than this grand *piazza*. Our Louvre and

Place de la Concorde, compared with it, are simply operatic decorations. The *plazza* rises upward from the bottom, and is thus embraced in a single glance. Two superb colonnades enclose its space within their crescent curves, and in the centre is an obelisk, on either side of which two fountains, discharging their feathery spray, people its vastness. Some black specks—men seated, visitors ascending, and a file of monks—dot the whiteness of the steps, while on the summit of all, elevated upon a mass of columns, pediments, and statues, rears the gigantic dome.

Whatever could be done to conceal this dome has been done. Looking at it a second time, it is clear that the façade overwhelms it. The façade is that of a pompous *hôtel-de-ville*, the construction of a period of decadence. Its forms are so complicated, its columns so multiplied, so many statues have been lavished upon it, and so many stones heaped up, that beauty has disappeared beneath the accumulation. You enter the interior, and the impression is the same. Two words rise to the lips—grand and theatrical. There is power in all this, but it is overdone. There is too much gilding and sculpture, too many precious marbles, bronzes, ornaments, panels, and medallions. In my opinion, every work of architecture, as well as every other work, should be like a cry; * in other words, a sincere expression, the extremity and complement of a sensation, and nothing more. For example, take this or that Titian or Veronese painted purposely to occupy the eye with voluptuousness or magnificence during some gay festival or official ceremony; or again, the interior of a fine Gothic cathedral like that of Strasburg, with its enormous dark nave traversed with gloomy purple, its silent files of columns, its sepulchral crypt lost in shadow, and its luminous rose windows,

* See the author's 'Philosophy of Art,' p. 69.

which, amidst all these Christian terrors, seem to afford glimpses into paradise.

On the contrary, there is no simple, pure emotion in this church. It is a composition like our Louvre. Its projectors said, 'Let us erect the most magnificent and imposing structure possible.' Bramante selected the vast vaults of Constantine's palace, and Michael Angelo the dome of the Pantheon, and out of two pagan conceptions, one amplified by the other, they extracted a Christian temple.

These arches, that cupola, and those mighty piers, all this splendid attire is grand and magnificent. Nevertheless there are but two orders of architecture—the Greek and the Gothic; the rest are simply transformations, disfigurements, or amplifications of these.

The builders of St. Peter's were simply pagans in fear of damnation, and nothing more. All that is sublime in religion, such as tender effusions in the presence of a compassionate Saviour, the fear of conscience before a just judge, the strong lyric enthusiasm of the Hebrew before an avenging God, the expansiveness of a free Greek genius before natural and joyous beauty—all these sentiments were wanting in them. They fasted on Friday, and combed the hair of a saint to obtain his good offices. As a recompense to Michael Angelo, the Pope granted him I know not how many indulgences on condition that he made the tour of the seven basilicas of Rome on horseback. Their passions were strong, and their energy unfaltering, and they became great because they sprung out of a great epoch, but a true religious sentiment they did not possess. They revived ancient paganism; but a second growth is never of the same value as the first. Petty superstition and narrow devotional habits soon arose to deform and render lifeless a primitive powerful inspiration. We have only to study

the interior decoration of this church in order to see to what vices they inclined. Bernini has infested it with mannered statues, who caper and give themselves airs. All these sculptured giants kicking about with half-modern faces and drapery pretending to be antique, produce the most pitiable effect. You say to yourself on seeing that procession of celestial porters, 'A fine arm, well poised! My brave monk, you stretch out your leg vigorously! My good woman, your robe floats very properly; be quite easy! My little cherubs, you fly as briskly as if on a swing! My worthy friends, especially yourselves, bronze cardinals, and you, symbolical virtues, you are as clever in your posturings as so many *figurants!*'

I am to visit Rome again. Perhaps to-day I am unjust. But for any sincere sentiment here I am sure it is wanting. The rows of sentimental figures by Bernini on the bridge of St. Angelo put me out of humour. They assume to express a tender, coquettish air, and wriggle about in Greek or Roman drapery as if in an eighteenth century petticoat. None of these works are consistent; three or four different sentiments in them struggle for mastery. Let the subject be a fasting, self-flagellating ascetic, and he is assigned a shape, vestments, and symbolry indicative of attachment to this life. To me nothing is more disagreeable than thorns, haircloth, and ecstatic eyes bestowed on a lusty young man or a healthy young woman really incapable of thinking of anything else but love. It is impossible here to feel any of the tenderness, any of the terrors, associated with a Gothic cathedral and a Christian life; the churches are too richly gilded and too bright, and the arches and pillars are too fine. It is impossible to find here that freshness of simple sensation, that joyousness and serenity, that smile of eternal youthfulness which radiates from an antique temple and from

Greek life. Crosses, images of martyrs, gold skeletons, and other similar objects, form too many emblems of mystification and mystic renunciation. It is, in fine, an immense spectacle hall, the most magnificent in the world, through which a grand institution proclaims its power to all eyes. It is not a temple of a religion, but the temple of a cult.

A Night Promenade.—The streets are almost deserted, and the scene is imposing—tragic, like the drawings of Piranesi. Few lights are visible, only so many as are necessary to reveal grand forms and to intensify the darkness. All noxious odours, dirt, and corruption have disappeared. The moon shines in a cloudless sky, and the bracing air, silence, and the sensation of the unknown, excite and startle one.

How grand! is the constantly recurring idea. There is nothing mean, commonplace, or vapid; there is no street or edifice that has not character, some strong marked character. No uniform compressive law has here interposed to level and discipline structures; each has arisen according to its own fancy without concern for the rest, and the confusion is admirable, like the studio of a great artist.

Antonine's column rears its shaft in the clear night air, and around it are solid palaces resting firmly on their foundations, and without clumsiness. That in the background, with its twenty illuminated arcades, and its two broad brilliant circular openings, resembles an arabesque of light, or some strange fancy creation blazing in the obscurity.

The fountain of the Piazza Navona flows magnificently in the stillness, its jetting waters sending forth myriads of the moon's bright beams. Under this vacillating light, amidst this incessant commotion, its colossal statues seem alive; their theatrical appearance is effaced; one sees only

giants writhing and leaping in the midst of sparks and glittering bubbles.

Window cornices, vast projecting balconies, and the sculptured edges of the roofs cut the walls with powerful shadows. Doleful streets, right and left, open like yawning caverns; here and there rises a black wall of some apparently abandoned convent or tall edifice surmounted by a tower, seeming to be a remnant of the middle ages; lights glimmer feebly in the distance, and life seems to be swallowed up in the increasing obscurity.

Nothing is so formidable as these enormous monasteries and huge square palaces in which no light is gleaming, and which rise up isolated in their inattackable massiveness like fortresses in a besieged town. Flat roofs, terraces, pediments, and other rigid and complicated forms, cut the clear sky with their sharp angles, whilst below, at their feet, the indistinct gates, posts, and buttresses crouch together in the shadows.

One advances and all appearances of life vanish. One might imagine himself in a dead deserted city, the skeleton remains of a great nation suddenly annihilated. You pass under the arcades of the Colonna palace, along its mute garden walls, and no longer see or hear anything human; only at long intervals, in the depths of some tortuous street, within the vague blackness of a porch seeming to be a subterranean outlet, is a dying street-lamp flickering amidst a circle of yellow light. These closed houses and high walls, extending their inhospitable lines in the gloom, appear like ranges of reefs on the sea coast, and, on emerging from their shadow, the broad spaces that present themselves, whitened with moonlight, seem like strands of desolate sand.

At length you reach the basilica of Constantine and its huge arcades with their head-dress of pendent vines. The eye follows their majestic sweep, and then suddenly, be-

tween the openings above, rests on the pale blue, the peculiar azure of night, like a panel of crystal incrusted with sparks. Advancing a few steps, the divine cupola of the sky, the serene transparent ether with its myriads of flashing brilliants, discloses itself above the lonely Forum. You pass by the side of prostrate columns, their monstrous shafts seemingly magnified. Leaning against one of these breast high, you contemplate the Colosseum. The side wall, still remaining entire, rises black and colossal at a single bound; it seems to incline over and about to fall. The moonlight, so bright on the ruined portion, allows you to distinguish the reddish hue of the stones. In this limpid atmosphere the roundness of the amphitheatre grows on you; it forms a sort of complete and formidable being. In this wonderful stillness it might be said to exist alone, and that man, and plants, and all this fleeting world, is but a seeming show. I have often experienced the same sensation among mountains. They also seem to be the veritable inhabitants of the earth; in their company the human hive is forgotten, and under the sky, which is their tent, one imagines himself listening to the speechless communion of the old monsters, the world's immutable possessors and eternal rulers.

Returning along the base of the Capitol, the distant basilicas and triumphal arches, and especially the noble and elegant columns of ruined temples, some solitary and others collected in fraternal groups, also seem to be alive. These, likewise, are placid existences, and simple and beautiful like the Greek *ĕphēbos.* Their Ionian heads bear an ornamental bandlet, and the moon sheds its rays on their polished shafts.

From ROME *to* NAPLES.—A long aqueduct appears on the right; afar on the horizon is a ruin, and here and there isolated crumbling arches; the illimitable dingy green plain extends on all sides, undulating with a faded

carpet of dead vegetation, washed by the rains, and scattered by the winds. Purplish grey clouds hang heavily overhead, and the locomotive discharges its rolling waves of steam to commingle with them. The monotonous aqueduct appears and disappears mile after mile like a dyke of rocks in a sea of moving grass. Towards the east dark mountains bristle, half covered with snow, while towards the west is a cultivated surface covered with the small tops and innumerable delicate stems of denuded fruit trees; a yellow brook washes its way, undermining the ground as it passes.

All this is melancholy, and still more so the stations, consisting of miserable wooden cabins in which a few faggots are kindled for the comfort of the passengers. Beggars and little boys throng the entrances, imploring a baiocco a demi-baiocco, a poor little demi-baiocco for the love of God, the Madonna, and St. Joseph, and all other saints in the calendar, with the persistence and shrillness, the tender impatient whining which dogs after a week of starvation display on first getting sight of a bone. It is difficult to decide what it is they wear on their feet; sandals they certainly are not, and still less shoes; they look like wrappings of cloths or old scraps picked out of the puddles, and which splash along with them in the mud. A bent, broad-brimmed, shapeless hat, and breeches, and cloak are indescribable; nothing resembles these but kitchen towels and infected rags piled up in junk-shops to make paper with.

I have studied a good many countenances, and my memory dwells on those I have seen since I came into Italy. All these range themselves under three or four distinct types. First there is the pretty and delicate cameo head, perfectly regular and *spirituelle*, with a lively alert air, betokening a capacity to comprehend readily, and to inspire love as well as to express it. There is, also, the

square head, planted on a solid trunk, with large sensual lips, and an expression of coarse gaiety, either grotesque or satiric. There is the lean, dark, sunburnt animal, with fleshless face, and salient features bearing an extraordinary expression, his eye flaming, and his hair crisp, looking like a volcano about to explode. There is, finally, the handsome strong man, stoutly built and muscular without clumsiness, of a rich glowing complexion, and who regards you calmly and fixedly, a vigorous complete being seeming to await action and self-expansion, but who, in waiting, is not prodigal of himself, and remains passive.

This road and landscape, all the way to Naples, are certainly beautiful, but under a clear sky and in summer. There are many fine, varied, half-wooded mountains, not high, and yet grand; sometimes a grey tower appears, covering a hilltop, and as round as a beehive. But forms are all confused by rain and fog, and winter spoils everything; there is nothing green; red dry leaves hang to the trees like old rags, and muddy torrents furrow the ground. Instead of a beautiful blooming girl, you contemplate a corpse.

BOOK II.

NAPLES.

CHAPTER I.

CLIMATE AND COUNTRY—THE STREETS OF NAPLES—CHURCHES—THE CONVENT OF SAN MARTINO.

Naples: February 20.—Another climate, another sky, almost another world. On approaching the bay this morning, as the view expanded and the horizon disclosed itself, a sudden brightness and splendour was all that was visible. In the distance, under a vapoury veil overhanging the sea, the mountains arose one above another, and spread out as luminous and as soft as clouds. The sea advanced in white rolling billows, and the sun, pouring down its flaming rays, converted it into a trackway of molten metal.

I passed half an hour in the Villa Reale, a promenade skirting the shore, planted with oaks and evergreens. A few young trees, transpierced with light, open their tender little leaves, and are already blooming with yellow blossoms. Statues of beautiful nude youths—Europa on the Bull—incline their white marble forms amidst the light green verdure. Sunshine and shadow vary the surface of the grass, and climbing vines interlace themselves around the columns. Here and there glows the bright blue of fresh flowers, their delicate velvety cups trembling in the

balmy breeze that comes to them through the trunks of the oaks. Both sea and atmosphere are beneficent. What a contrast, when one recalls the ocean and its coasts, our cliffs of Gascony and Normandy beaten by winds and lashed by storms, with stunted trees sheltering themselves in the hollows, and bushes and the shorn grass clinging so miserably to the hillsides!

Here vegetation is nourished by the neighbouring waves; you feel the freshness and mildness of the atmosphere which caresses and expands it. You forget yourself as you listen to the murmur of the whispering leaves and contemplate their moving shadows on the sand. Meanwhile, a few paces off, the sea sends forth its deep roar, as its foaming crests break on the beach, and subside in snowy circles. The mist vanishes before the sun; through the foliage appears Vesuvius and its neighbours, the entire mountain range in clear relief, and of a pale violet hue, which, as the sun declines, becomes tenderer and tenderer, until, finally, the lightest tint of mauve, or the corolla of a flower, is less exquisite. The sky is now serene, and the calm sea becomes a sea of azure.

It is impossible to describe this scene. Lord Byron rightly says that the beauties of art and nature are not to be placed on the same level. A picture is always less, and a landscape always more, than our imagination paints it. How beautiful!—what more can be said? How grand, how lovely! the heart and the senses thrill with pleasure: nothing could be more voluptuous, nothing nobler. How can one toil and produce in the presence of all this beauty? It is of no avail to possess fine residences, and to laboriously fashion our vast machines called Constitution or Church, and to seek pleasure in vanity and ostentation. Let us open our eyes and live, for we have the flower of life in a glance!

I sat down on a bench. Evening was coming on, and

in watching the fading tints it seemed as if I were in the Elysian fields of the ancient poets. Elegant forms of trees defined themselves clearly on the transparent azure. Leafless sycamores and naked oaks seemed to be smiling, the exquisite serenity of the sky, crossed with their web of light branches, apparently communicating itself to them. They did not appear to be dead or torpid as with us, but seemed to be dozing, and, at the touch of the balmy breeze, ready to open their buds and confide their blossoms to the coming spring. Here and there shone a glimmering star, and the moon began to diffuse its white light. Statues still whiter seemed in this mysterious gloom to be alive; groups of young maidens, in light flowing robes, advanced noiselessly, like beautiful spirits of gladness. I seemed to be gazing on ancient Greek life, to comprehend the delicacy of their sensations, to find a never-ending study in the harmony of these slender forms and faded tints; colour and luminousness no longer seemed requisite. I was listening to the verses of Aristophanes, and beheld his youthful athlete with crowned brow, chaste and beautiful, walking pleasantly with a sage companion of his own years amongst poplars and the flowering smilax. Naples is a Greek colony, and the more one sees the more does he recognise that the taste and spirit of a people assume the characteristics of its landscape and climate.

Towards eight o'clock the breeze had died away. The firmament seemed to be of lapis-lazuli; the moon, like an immaculate queen shining alone in the azure, shed her silvery beams on the broad waters and converted them into a glittering milky way. No words can express the grace and sweetness of the mountains enveloped in their last tint, the vague violet of their nocturnal robe. The mole and a forest of masts with their deep dark reflections rendered them still more charming, while the *Chiaja* on

the right sweeping around the gulf, together with its rows of illuminated houses, gave them a garland of flame.

Lamps glimmer on all sides. The people are laughing, chatting, and eating in the open air. The sky itself is a fête.

Through the Streets.—What streets one passes through! Steep, narrow, dirty, and bordered at every story with overhanging balconies; a mass of petty shops, open stalls, men and women buying, selling, gossiping, gesticulating, and elbowing each other; most of them dwarfed and ugly, the women especially being small and flat-nosed, their faces sallow and eyes brilliant, and slovenly attired in fancy shawls, red, violet, and orange neck handkerchiefs—the most staring colours possible—and mock jewelry. In the vicinity of the Piazza del Mercato winds a labyrinth of paved tortuous lanes buried in dust and strewn with orange-peel, melon-rinds, fragments of vegetables, and other nameless refuse; the crowd herd together here, black and crawling, in the palpable shadow, beneath a strip of blue sky. All is bustling, eating, drinking, and bad odours; it reminds one of rats in a rat-trap. It is the same bad air and disorder, and the same abandonment that one encounters in the bye-streets of London. Fortunately, the climate is favourable to pig-styes and rags.

Occasionally rising out of these dens is the huge angle or lofty gateway of some ancient edifice, through the openings of which you see wide staircases and balustrades ascending and intersecting each other, along with terraces and colonnades, exhibiting the remains of the grandeur of private life under the Spanish dominion. Here dwelt the great nobles and their gentlemen retainers, with their armed domestics and their carriages, soliciting pensions, giving fêtes, and attending ceremonies, they alone con-

spicuous and of importance; whilst in the surrounding lanes the *canaille* of traders and artisans gazed on their sumptuous parade as pitiful and disdained as formerly were the troops of serfs tolerated around the feudal donjon.

Crowds of monks trot about the muddy streets, in sandals or shoes, and without stockings. Many of these look waggish and quizzical, something of a cross between Socrates and Punch. They have evidently sprung from the populace. They flounder along in their threadbare garbs with the jaunty air of a common coachman. One of them resting his elbows on a balcony to look at us, is a strapping cunning old fellow, such as Rabelais paints, displaying his flesh and importance somewhat like a curious distrustful hog. In better streets, again, you encounter a better class of ecclesiastics; the trim young abbés clad in black, and as orderly as if just out of a bandbox, and with an intelligent and diplomatic or reserved expression. High and low, the palace and the hovel, are both supplied with them!

We enter five or six churches on our way. The statues of the Virgin here are painted like barbers' models, besides being dressed in the habiliments of ladies; one wears an expansive rose-coloured frock, blue ribbons, a tasteful coiffure, and six swords in her breast. The infant Jesus and the saints are also attired in modern fashion; some of the latter wear actual cowls, and others exhibit their corpse-like skins and bloody stigmata. It is impossible to appeal to the eye and the senses more grossly.* An old woman is on her knees moaning before

* 'A friend describes a Madonna he saw in Sicily: they had plated her breast with a great *ex-voto* of silver, representing the part of the body cured through her intercession. The patient had had hemorrhoids. At Messina, on the 15th August, they carry through the streets, in honour of the Virgin, a machine composed of revolving hoops, in which little children, figuring as angels, are attached, and in which they turn about during seven hours, the

the Virgin. Thus bedizened and bleeding, the Madonna is as real to her as any widowed princess; they address her with similar respect, and weep in order to obtain her sympathy.

Santa Maria della Pietra, Santa Chiara, and San Gennaro.—The first of these churches is a brilliant *bon-bon* box. You are here shown a veiled statue of Modesty in marble; but the veil is so thin and adhesive, so well disposed about the neck and forms of the body, that she appears more than naked. In the depths of a crypt is a dead Christ wrapped in a shroud. The custodian produces a candle, and by its dim light and in this cold damp atmosphere your eyes and senses, the whole nervous system, is as much shocked as if brought in contact with a corpse. Such are the sensational achievements of superstition and sculpture; artistic vanity is gratified, they amuse the epicurean, and make the devout shudder. I will not dwell on the richness of the paintings, on the lavish display of ornament, on the pretentious decoration, all of which is more conspicuous in Santa Chiara, in the enormous silver vines that encumber the altar, in the numberless bronze and gilded balustrades and little golden balls and tufts and garlanded tapers, and overloaded altars, similar to those that little girls arrange and deck for the Fête-Dieu. Numerous churches whose names I have forgotten are all bedizened with this finery. This pagan Catholicism is offensive; sensuality can always be detected under the mantle of asceticism. Skulls, hour-glasses, and mystic invocations present incongruities alongside of gilding, precious marbles, and Grecian capitals. There is no Christianity about it,

greater number being taken out dead or dying. Their mothers console themselves by saying that the Virgin has taken their little angel into Paradise.' ('Mysteries of the Convents of Naples,' p. 39, by Enrichetta Caracciolo, ex-Benedictine.)

except its superstition and fear. Here particularly is an absence of grandeur and a reign of affectation. A church is simply a magazine of pretty things. In striving to ascertain the sentiment of the people for whom all this was built, I find only a desire to enjoy fresh air in a jeweller's shop, or at best a notion that in giving large sums of money to a saint he will preserve one from fever; it is a casino for the use of fancy-fed brains. In respect to its architects and painters they were declaimers, who, through imitations to deceive the eye, and vast arches with curious span, aimed to reanimate a worn-out attention. All this indicates a degenerate epoch, the extinction of genuine feeling, the turgidity of a toiling, exhausted art, the pernicious effects of a perverted civilisation and foreign dominion. Still, amidst this decadence, there are occasional portions instinct with the old vigorous genius. For example, at San Gennaro some powerful figures painted by Vasari over the entrances, and ceilings by Santa-Fede and Forti, containing many proud and spirited groups and figures, along with some tombs and a large nave with rows of medallions of archbishops, and the lofty spring of which and gilded background *en coquille* display the majesty and importance of genuine decoration.

The Convent of San Martino.—To this we ascend by narrow, dirty, and densely-populated streets. I cannot accustom myself to these tattered, chattering, gesticulating characters. The women are not handsome; on the contrary, their complexion is sallow, even among the young. Besides this, their flat noses spoil their faces. Altogether you have a lively and occasionally a piquant countenance, sufficiently resembling the pleasing but irregular features of the women of the eighteenth century, but very far removed from the beauty of the Greeks which has been assigned to them.

We mount up higher and higher, always ascending; one set of steps after another, and no end to them, and always the same rags suspended on surrounding cords; then narrow streets with loaded donkeys feeling their way along slippery declivities, muddy streams trickling between the stones, ragged little scamps of beggars, and full views into interior household arrangements. This mountain is a sort of elephant whereon crawling, fidgety human insects have taken up their abode. You pass a house deprived of its lower story, to which the inmates ascend by a ladder; then another with an open door, through which you see a man strumming a guitar, surrounded by a lot of women assorting vegetables. Suddenly you emerge from this rag-fair, these rat-holes, this gipsy encampment, and reach the magnificent convent, with all the beauties of nature before you and all its treasures of art.

One of its courts especially, an ample enclosure surrounded by four white marble porticoes, and with a vast cistern in the centre, seemed to me admirable. Shrubbery, high and thick, the blue lavender, overhangs its pavement, displaying its light and healthy verdure; while above shines glittering white marble, and over this the rich blue sky, each of these colours framing the other and enhancing their respective value. How well they comprehend architecture here, and especially the portico! In the north this feature is an excrescence, an importation of pedantry; nobody knows what to do with it, unaccustomed as people are to evening promenades in the open air, and requiring no protection from the sun nor openings to admit the cool breeze of the sea. And especially are they insensible to the effect of simple lines and broad contrasts of few and simple colours. One must live beneath an intensely blue sky in order to enjoy the polish and whiteness of marble. Art was made for this country. In the happy frame of mind produced by this luminous

sky and pure atmosphere, one loves ornament, and is content to see coloured marbles under his feet forming designs, and at the end of a gallery some large sculptured medallion, and on the summit of a portico half-nude statues of beautiful young saints or some female form of the same sentiment in fine drapery. Christianity thus becomes pleasing and picturesque; the eye is charmed and the soul is moved with a spirit of joy and nobleness. At the end of one of the galleries are balconies facing the sea. From these you have a view of Naples immensely extended, and stretching as far as Vesuvius by a line of white houses; and around the gulf the bending coast embracing the blue sea, and beyond, the golden glimmering surface sparkling and flashing in sunlight, the sun itself resembling a lamp suspended in the vast concave firmament above.

Beneath is a long slope covered with dull green olive trees, forming the convent gardens. Avenues of shady trellises run wherever the soil is level enough to sustain them. Platforms with grand isolated trees, massive foundations burying themselves in the rocks, a colonnade in ruins, the broad bay beyond, innumerable little sails, Monte San Angelo, and smoking Vesuvius, all contribute to make of this convent a world by itself, secluded but complete, and so full of beauty. One is here transported leagues away from our common-place *bourgeois* life. Its inmates go bareheaded in brown and black garbs, and wear coarse shoes; but beauty surrounds them, and no prince's palace I have yet seen makes such a noble impression. Petty comforts are wanting here, but this only renders the rest more exalted.

I visited lately one of the costliest and most elegant of modern mansions, situated like this, facing the sea. Its proprietor is a man of taste, has accumulated millions, and is prodigal of his wealth. Everything is polished, but

nothing grand; not a colonnade is to be seen, nor a splendid apartment. Of what use would they be? It is an agreeable residence, but not a corner, outside or inside, would a painter care to copy. Every object by itself is a model of finish and convenience; there are six bell knobs by each bedtable, the curtains are exquisite, and the easy-chairs could not possibly be more comfortable. You find, as in English houses, every sort of utensil for petty necessities. The architect and the upholsterer have deliberated over the best means for avoiding heat, cold, and too much light, and how to wash and to expectorate with the utmost facility, and that is all. The sole works of art visible are a few pictures by Watteau and Boucher. And these are incongruous, because they recall another epoch. Is there anything of the eighteenth century still subsisting with us? Do we retain the antechamber and the splendid parade of aristocratic life? A crowd of lackeys would annoy us; if we maintain courtiers it is in our bureaus; what we require in our houses is easy chairs, choice segars, a good dinner, and at most, on ceremonial occasions, a little extra display to do ourselves credit. We no longer know how to live on a grand scale, to live out of ourselves; we confine ourselves to a small circle of personal comfort, and interest ourselves only in ephemeral works. Living at that time was reduced to simple wants, and thus free, the mind could contemplate distant horizons and embrace all that expands and endures beyond man's existence.

A sallow faced monk with brilliant eyes, and a reserved concentrated expression, conducted us into the church. There is not a corridor nor a vista that does not bear an artistic imprint. At the entrance, in a bare court, is a Madonna by Bernini, wriggling in her mincing drapery, and contemplating her infant, as pretty and delicate as a boudoir Cupid; but she is a superb figure, nevertheless,

and testifies to her race—the race of noble forms created by the great masters. When this convent was decorated in the seventeenth century, pure ideas of the beautiful no longer prevailed, but the beautiful was still an aspiration. The contrast is apparent on resorting to the interiors of Windsor, Buckingham Palace, or the Tuileries.

This church is of extraordinary richness. What is here accumulated of precious marble, sculpture, and paintings, is incredible. The balustrades and columns are bijous. A legion of contemporary sculptors and painters, Guido, Lanfranco, Caravaggio, the Chevalier d'Arpino, Solimene, Luca Giordano, have all expended upon it the extravagances, the graces, and the dainty conceptions of their pencils. The chapels alongside the great nave, and the sacristy, display paintings by hundreds. There is not a corner of the ceiling that is not covered with fresco. These figures all rush backwards and forwards as if they were in the open air; draperies are floating and commingling, and rosy flesh glows underneath silken tunics, their fine limbs seeming to delight in a display of their forms and movements. Many of the half-naked saints are charming youths, and an angel by Luca Giordano, attired in blue, with naked limbs and shoulders, resembles an amorous young girl. The attitudes are all exaggerated; it is dire confusion, but it harmonises with the lustre of marble, the flutter of drapery, the sparkle of golden ornaments, and the splendour of columns and capitals. This decoration cannot be exclusively attributed to the cold flat taste of the priests. The breath of the preceding century still animates it; we have the style of Euripides if we no longer possess that of Sophocles. Some of the subjects are magnificent, and among them a 'Descent from the Cross' by Ribera. The sun's rays shone through the half-drawn red silk curtains upon the head of Christ; the darks of the back-

ground seemed still more lugubrious, contrasted suddenly with this bright light falling on the luminous flesh, while the mournful Spanish colouring, the powerful, mysterious tones of the impassioned countenances in shadow, gave to the scene the aspect of a vision, such as once filled the monastic chivalric brain of a Calderon or a Lope de Vega.

CHAPTER II.

POZZUOLI AND BAIÆ—CASTELLAMARE—SORRENTO—HOMERIC LIFE.

At the end of the grotto of Pausilippo the country begins, a kind of orchard full of high vines, each one wedded to a tree. Underneath these shine the elegant green lupine and a species of the yellow crocus. All this lies before you sleeping in the misty atmosphere, like jewels embedded in gauze.

The road turns, and the sea appears, and you follow it as far as Pozzuoli. The morning is gray, and watery clouds float slowly above the dull horizon. The mist has not evaporated; now and then it diminishes and lets a pale ray of sunshine glimmer through, like an imperceptible smile. Meanwhile the sea casts its long white swell on a strand as tranquil as itself, and then recedes with a low monotonous murmur.

A uniform tint of pale blue, as if effaced, fills the immense expanse of the sea and the sky. Both sea and sky seem to be merged into each other; often do the small black boats appear like birds poised in the air. All is repose; the ear scarcely detects the gentle murmur of the waves. The delicate hues of dripping slate in its dewy crevices alone furnish an idea of their faded tint. You repeat to yourself Virgil's lines; you imagine those silent regions into which the Sibyl descends, the realm of floating shades, not cold and lugubrious like the Cimmerean land of Homer, but where existence, vague and vapoury,

reposes until the powerful rays of the sun concentrate it, and send it forth to flow radiant in life's torrent; or again on those slumbering strands where future souls, a humming vapoury throng, fly indistinctly like bees around the calyx of a flower. Nisida, Ischia in the distance, and Cape Mysena, bear no resemblance to visible objects, but to noble phantoms on the point of emerging into life. Farther on, the whole country, the white trunks of the sycamores, the verdure softened by mist and winter, the slender reeds, the passive surface of Lake Avernus, the faint mountain forms—all this mute languid landscape seems to be at rest, asleep, not subdued and stiffened by death, but softly enveloped in genial monotonous tranquillity. Such is the ancient conception of the extinction of life, of the *beyond*. Their tombs are not mournful; the dead repose; they do not suffer, and are not annihilated; they bring them meat, wine, and milk; they still exist, only they are transferred from the light of day to the gloom of twilight. Christian and Germanic ideas, the spiritual voices of Pascal and Shakspeare, do not address us here.

I have not much to say of Baiæ. It is a miserable village with a few boats moored around an old fortress. The rains have made a cesspool of it. Pozzuoli is still worse. Here hogs covered with mire roam about the streets; some with a curb encompassing the belly, grunt and are struggling for freedom. Ragged little urchins around them seem to be their brothers. A dozen or more of semi-beggars, a filthy parasite *canaille*, huddle around the carriage; you drive them off again and again, but to no purpose; they insist on serving as your guides. Three years ago, it seems, they were much worse; instead of twelve on our track, we would have had fifty. At Naples the boys wandered through the streets as they now do here. The people are still quite savage; when they heard of the

arrival of Victor Emmanuel they were much astonished, and supposed that Victor Emmanuel had dethroned Garibaldi. Many of them have but one shoe, others trot about in the mud barefooted and barelegged. Their rags cannot be described—similar ones can only be found in London. Through the open doors you observe women freeing their children of vermin, and miserable straw-pallets with lolling forms on them. On the public thoroughfares at the entrance of the town you find clusters of vagabonds, little and big, awaiting their prey, perchance some foreigner, on whom they immediately pounce. Three among them showing themselves more eager than the others, my companion began to banter them. They are fond of humour, and reply to it with a mixture of impudence and humility. They even retort upon each other. One especially, pointing to his comrade, charged him with having a deformed mistress, and described the deformity with some detail. What woman is so unfortunate as to possess such a lover! I suppose her olfactory nerves are no longer sensitive. In the grotto of Pausilippo, and throughout Naples in general, one is always inclined to stop his nose; in summer, they say, it is much worse. And this is universal in the south, at Avignon, at Toulon, as well as in Italy. It is asserted that southerly senses are more delicate than northern;—but this is true only for the eye and the ear.

We visit a temple of Serapis, where three fine columns remain standing; in the vicinity are antique baths and sulphurous springs, the entire coast being strewed with Roman remains. Arcades of villas, underground ruins, and maritime substructures, form an almost continuous chain. Most of the wealthy citizens of Rome possessed country houses here; but to-day I am not in an archæological humour.

I am wrong—the amphitheatre is well worth the trouble.

The arches beneath it recently exhumed are as fresh as if constructed yesterday. An enormous subterranean story served as a lodging-place for gladiators and animals. This amphitheatre would seat 30,000 spectators. There was not an ancient Roman town from Antioch to Cadiz, and from Metz to Carthage, that did not possess one of these structures. For four hundred years what a consumption of living flesh! The more you contemplate the circus, the more evident is it that antique life culminated there. The city formed an association for the hunting of man, and to make the most of him; it used and then abused its captives and slaves, in times of moderation subsisting on their labour, and in ages of debauchery obtaining entertainment from their death throes.

In these vast cellars, in this subterranean city, columns lie on the ground, prostrated by earthquakes, similar to huge trunks of trees. Green foliage hangs pendent along the walls, the water percolating through these like a fountain which, drop by drop, falls from the locks of a naiad.

A Promenade to Castellamare and Sorrento.—The sky is almost clear. Only above Naples hangs a bank of clouds, and around Vesuvius huge white masses of smoke, moving and stationary.

I never yet saw, even in summer at Marseilles, the blue of the sea so deep, bordering even on hardness. Above this powerful lustrous azure, absorbing three-quarters of the visible space, the white sky seems to be a firmament of crystal. As we recede we obtain a better view of the undulating coast, embraced in one grand mountain form, all its parts uniting like the members of one body. Ischia and the naked promontories on the extreme end repose in their lilac envelope, like a slumbering Pompeian nymph under her veil. Veritably, to paint such nature as this, this violet continent extending around

this broad luminous water, one must employ the terms of the ancient poets, and represent the great fertile goddess embraced and beset by the eternal ocean, and above them the serene effulgence of the dazzling Jupiter. *Hoc sublime candens quem omnes invocant Jovem.*

We encounter on the road some fine faces with long elegant features, quite Grecian; some intelligent noble-looking girls, and here and there hideous mendicants cleaning their hairy breasts. But the race is much superior to that of Naples, where it is deformed and diminutive, the young girls there appearing like stunted pallid grisettes. Labourers are busy in the field. By frequently seeing naked legs and feet, you get to be interested in forms; you are pleased to see a muscle of the calf strain in pushing a cart, and swell and compass the entire limb; the eye follows its curve up and down, and you admire the firm grasp of the toes on the ground, the fitness and insertion of each bone, the roundness of the large toe, the aptitude and force and activity of the limb. To daily spectacles of this kind in former times we are indebted for sculpture. As soon as the shoe appeared it could no longer be said, as in the time of Homer, 'the fine-heeled women;' nowadays the foot has no form; it interests nobody but a shoemaker, and no longer provides models which, gradually correcting each other, allow the development of its ideal type. In former times the Roman, rich or poor, also the Greek, always exposed his leg, and in the baths and in the gymnasia, his entire body. The custom of exercising naked was distinctly a Greek trait; in Herodotus we see how offensive it was to the Asiatics and other barbarians.

The railroad skirts the sea a few paces off and almost on a level with it. A harbour appears blackened with lines of rigging, and then a mole, consisting of a small half-ruined fort, reflecting a clear sharp shadow in the lumin-

ous expanse. Surrounding this rise square houses, grey as if charred, and heaped together like tortoises under round roofs, serving them as a sort of thick shell. This is Torre del Greco, protecting itself against earthquakes and the showers of ashes launched forth by Vesuvius. Beyond breaks the sea, heaving and tossing like a tide-way. All this is peculiar and charming. On this fertile soil, full of cinders, cultivation extends to the shore and forms gardens; a simple reed hedge protects them from the sea and the wind; the Indian fig with its clumsy thorny leaves clings to the slopes; verdure begins to appear on the branches of the trees, the apricots showing their smiling pink blossoms; half-naked men work the friable soil without apparent effort; a few square gardens contain columns and small statues of white marble. Everywhere you behold traces of antique beauty and joyousness. And why wonder at this when you feel that you have the divine vernal sun for a companion, and on the right, whenever you turn to the sea, its flaming golden waves.

With what facility you here forget all ugly objects! I believe I passed at Castellamare some unsightly modern structures, a railroad station, hotels, a guard-house, and a number of rickety vehicles hurrying along in quest of fares. This is all effaced from my mind; nothing remains but impressions of obscure porches with glimpses of bright courts filled with glossy oranges and spring verdure, of esplanades with children playing on them and nets drying, and happy idlers snuffing the breeze and contemplating the capricious heaving of the tossing sea.

On leaving Castellamare the road forms a *corniche** winding along the bank. Huge white rocks, split off from

* This term designates a road built along the rocky shore of a seaside being a figurative application of the architectural term *cornice*.—Tr.

the cliffs above, lie below in the midst of the eternally besieging waves. On the left the mountains lift their shattered pinnacles, fretted walls, and projecting crags, all that scaffolding of indentations which strike you as the ruins of a line of rocked and tottering fortresses. Each projection, each mass throws its shadow on the surrounding white surfaces, the entire range being peopled with tints and forms.

Sometimes the mountain is rent in twain, and the sides of the chasm are lined with cultivation, descending in successive stages. Sorrento is thus built on three deep ravines. All these hollows contain gardens, crowded with masses of trees overhanging each other. Nut-trees, already lively with sap, project their white branches like gnarled fingers; everything else is green; winter lays no hand on this eternal spring. The thick lustrous leaf of the orange-tree rises from amidst the foliage of the olive, and its golden apples glisten in the sun by thousands, interspersed with gleams of the pale lemon; often in these shady lanes do its glittering leaves flash out above the crest of the walls. This is the land of the orange. It grows even in miserable court-yards, alongside of dilapidated steps, spreading its luxuriant tops everywhere in the bright sunlight. The delicate aromatic odour of all these opening buds and blossoms is a luxury of kings, which here a beggar enjoys for nothing.

I passed an hour in the garden of the hotel, a terrace overlooking the sea about half-way up the bank. A scene like this fills the imagination with a dream of perfect bliss. The house stands in a luxurious garden, filled with orange and lemon-trees, as heavily laden with fruit as those of a Normandy orchard; the ground at the foot of the trees is covered with it. Clusters of foliage and shrubbery of a pale green, bordering on blue, occupy intermediate spaces. The rosy blossoms of the peach,

so tender and delicate, bloom on its naked branches. The walks are of bright blue porcelain, and the terrace displays its round verdant masses overhanging the sea, of which the lovely azure fills all space.

I have not yet spoken of my impressions after leaving Castellamare. The charm was only too great. The pure sky, the pale azure almost transparent, the radiant blue sea as chaste and tender as a virgin bride, this infinite expanse so exquisitely adorned as if for a festival of rare delight, is a sensation that has no equal. Capri and Ischia on the line of the sky lie white in their soft vapoury tissue, and the divine azure gently fades away surrounded by this border of brightness.

Where find words to express all this? The gulf seemed like a marble vase purposely rounded to receive the sea. The satin sheen of a flower, the soft luminous petals of the velvet orris with shimmering sunshine on their pearly borders, such are the images that fill the mind, and which accumulate in vain and are ever inadequate.

The water at the base of these rocks is now a transparent emerald, reflecting the tints of topaz and amethyst; again a liquid diamond, changing its hue according to the shifting influences of rock and depth; or again a flashing diadem, glittering with the splendour of this divine effulgence.

As the sun declines, the blue towards the north deepens in tone, and resembles the colour of dark wine. The coast becomes black, rising in relief like a barrier of jet, whilst the evening glow spreads and diffuses itself over the sea. As I passed along the road I thought of Ulysses and his companions; of their two-sailed barks, similar to those here dancing on the waves like sea-gulls; on the indented shores by which they coasted; on the unknown creeks in which they anchored at night; on the vague astonishment excited by new forests; on the repose of

their wearied limbs on these dry sandy promontories; on those fine heroic forms whose nudity graced these desert capes. Syrens with dishevelled locks and marble torsos might well arise in these azure depths before those polished rocks, and but little effort of the imagination is necessary to catch the song of the enchantress Circe. In this climate she might address Ulysses, 'Come, place thy sword in its sheath, and we two will then betake ourselves to my couch, that there united by love. we may trust in one another.' The words of the old poet on the purple sea, on the ocean embracing the earth, on the white-armed women, come into the mind naturally as on their native soil.

Indeed, all is beauty, and in this clement atmosphere a simple life may revive as in the time of Homer. All that three thousand years of civilisation have added to our well-being seems useless. What does man need here? A strip of linen and a piece of cloth if, like Ulysses' companions, his body is healthy and he comes of good stock; once clothed, the rest is superfluous, or comes of itself. They slaughter a stag, roast his flesh on coals, drink wine from skins, light fires, and repose at evening on the sand. How complicated and perverted man has become! How gladly one dwells on the luxurious life of a goddess as Homer imagines it! 'There was a great cave in which the fair-haired nymph dwelt. A large fire was burning on the hearth, and at a distance the smell of well-cleft cedar and of frankincense that was burning shed odour through the island; but she within was singing with a beautiful voice, and going over the web, wove with a golden shuttle. But a flourishing wood sprung up around her grot, alder and poplar and sweet-smelling cypress. There also birds with spreading wings slept, owls and hawks, and wide-tongued crows of the ocean, to which maritime employment is a care. Then a vine in its

prime was spread about the hollow grot, and it flourished with clusters. But four fountains flowed in succession with white water, turned near one another, each in different ways; but around them flourished soft meadows of violet, and of parsley. There indeed even an immortal coming would admire it, when he beheld, and would be delighted in his mind.' *

She herself spreads the table, and serves her guest like Nausicaa; if necessary she accompanies the servants to wash his vestments in the neighbouring torrent. Acts of this kind were performed naturally like walking; they no more thought of avoiding one than of avoiding the other. Thus was the force and agility of the limbs maintained; it was an instinct and a pleasure to exercise and employ them. Man is still a noble animal, almost related to the fine-blooded horses that he feeds on his pastures; thus the use of his arms and his body is not to him servile. Ulysses, with axe and auger, cuts and fashions the olive trunk that serves as the framework of his nuptial couch; the young chiefs that strive to espouse his wife slaughter and dress the sheep and hogs they consume. And sentiments are as natural as habits. Man does not constrain himself; he is not partially developed on the side of savage heroism as in Germany, or that of morbid superstition as in India; he is not ashamed of fear sometimes, of confessing it, and of even being moved to tears.

Goddesses love heroes, and offer themselves without blushing, as a flower inclines to the neighbouring flower that renders it fertile. Desire seems as beautiful as modesty, vengeance as forgiveness. Man blooms out fully, harmoniously, easily, like platanes and the orange nourished by fresh sea breezes and the balmy atmosphere

* The Odyssey, translated by Buckley.

of ravines, and which spread their round tops without hand to prune them or rigour of climate to repel the sap from their buds and blossoms. Out of all these narratives, out of the forests and waters just traversed, vaguely emerges the figures of antique heroes; that of Ulysses rising out of the flood, 'grander in form and more broad-shouldered' than other men, 'his locks falling upon his neck similar to the flowers of the hyacinth,' or alongside of him the young maidens who lay aside their garments and play on the river bank, and among them Nausicaa, 'the unconquered maiden, taller than her companions by more than a head.'

Even this does not suffice. It seemed to me that to describe this sky, this intensely bright luminous atmosphere enveloping and animating all things, the smiling radiant sea its spouse, this earth which advances to meet them, it would be necessary to revert to the Vedic hymns, and there, like our first parents, find true existences, simple loving universal beings, shadowy, eternal dvinities, now no longer recognised by us, occupied as we are with the details of our little life, but who, in sum, subsist alone, bearing us, protecting us, and living together as formerly, unconscious of the imperceptible movements and ephemeral toiling and scratching of our civilisation on their bosom.

CHAPTER III.

HERCULANEUM AND POMPEII—THE CITY OF ANTIQUITY, AND ITS LIFE.

Several days at Herculaneum and Pompeii.—Thousands and thousands of objects pass before one's eyes, all of which, on returning home, whirl through the brain. How abstract from this chaos any dominant impression, any connected view of the whole?

The first and most enduring is the image of the reddish-grey city, half ruined and deserted, a pile of stones on a hill of rocks, with rows of thick wall, and bluish flagging glittering in the dazzling white atmosphere; and surrounding this the sea, the mountains, and an infinite perspective.

On the summit stand the temples, that of Justice, of Venus, of Augustus, of Mercury, the house of Eumachia, and other temples, still incomplete, and, farther on, also on an elevation, the temple of Neptune. They also raised their gods on high in the pure atmosphere, of itself a divinity. The forum and the curia alongside afford a noble spot for councils, and to offer sacrifices. In the distance you discern the grand lines of the vapoury mountains, the tranquil tops of the Italian pine; then to the east, within the blonde sunlit haze, fine tree-forms and diversities of culture. You turn, and but little effort of the imagination enables you to reconstruct these temples. These

columns, these Corinthian capitals, this simple arrangement, those openings of blue between those marble shafts, what an impression such a spectacle contemplated from infancy left on the mind! The city in those days was a veritable patrimony, and not, as now, a government collection of lodging-houses. Of what significance to me are the Rouen or Limoges of to-day? I can lodge there amidst piles of other lodgings: life comes from Paris. Paris itself, what is it but another heap of lodgings, the life of which issues from a bureau filled with clerks and red tape? Here, on the contrary, men regarded their city as jewel and casket; they bore with them everywhere the image of their acropolis and its bright illuminated temples; the villages of Gaul and Germany, the whole barbaric north, seemed to them simply mire and wilderness. In their eyes, a man who belonged to no city was not a man, but a kind of brute, almost a beast—a beast of prey, out of which nothing could be made but a beast of burden. The city is an unique institution, the fruit of a sovereign idea that for twelve centuries controlled all man's actions; it is the great invention by which man first emerged from a primitive state of savagery. It was both feudal castle and church: how man loved it, how devoted he was to it, and how absorbed by it no tongue can tell. To the universe at large he was either a stranger or an enemy: he had no rights in it; neither his body nor his property were safe in it; if he found protection there it was a matter of grace; he never thought of it but as a place of danger or of plunder: the enclosure of his city was his sole refuge and fortress. Moreover, here dwelt his divinities, his Jupiter and Juno, gods inhabiting the city, attached to the soil, and who, in primitive conceptions, constituted the soil itself, with all its streams, its fruits and the firmament above. Here was his hearthstone, his penates,

his ancestors, reposing in their tombs, incorporated with the soil and gathered to it by the earth, the great nurse, and whose subterranean manes in their silent bed watched over him unceasingly; it was a combination of all salutary, sacred, and beautiful things, and for him to defend, to love, and to venerate. 'Country is more than father or mother,' said Socrates to Crito; 'and whatever violence or whatever injustice she inflicts upon us we must submit without striving to escape from it.' So did Greece and Rome comprehend life. When their philosophers, Aristotle or Plato, treat of the State, it is as a city, a compact exclusive city of from five to ten thousand families, in which marriage, occupations, and the like, are subordinated to the interests of the public. If to all these peculiarities we add the accurate and picturesque imagination of southern races, their aptitude at representing corporeal forms and local objects, the glowing exterior and bold relief of their city, we comprehend that such a conception of it produced in antique breasts a unique sensation, and furnished sources of emotion and devotion to which we are strangers.

All these streets are narrow; the greater portion are mere lanes, over which one strides with ease. Generally there is room only for a cart, and ruts are still visible: from time to time wide stones afford a crossing like a bridge. These details indicate other customs than our own; there was evidently no great traffic as in our cities, nothing like our heavily-loaded vehicles, and fast-trotting fanciful carriages. Their carts transported grain, oil, and provisions: much of the transportation was done on the arm and by slaves: the rich travelled about in litters. They possessed fewer and different conveniences. One prominent trait of antique civilisation is the *absence of industrial pursuits.* All supplies, utensils, and tissues, everything that machines and free labour now

produce in such enormous quantities for everybody and at every price, were wanting to them. It was the slave who turned the mill-wheel: man devoted himself to the beautiful, and not to the useful; producing but little, he could consume but little. Life was necessarily simple, and philosophers and legislators were well aware of this; if they enjoined temperance it was not through pedantic motives, but because luxury was visibly incompatible with the social state of things. A few thousands of proud, brave, temperate men, with only half a shirt and a mantle apiece, who delighted in the view of a hill with a group of beautiful temples and statues, who entertained themselves with public business, and passed their days in the gymnasium, at the forum, in the baths and the theatre, who washed and anointed themselves with oil, and were content with things as they stood;—such was the city of antiquity. When their necessities and refinements get to be immoderate, the slave who only has his arms no longer suffices. For the establishment of vast complicated organisations like our modern communities, for example, the equality and security of a limited monarchy, in which order and the acquisition of wealth is the common end of all, there was no basis; when Rome desired to create it the cities were crushed out, the exhausted slaves had disappeared, the spring to set it in motion was broken, and all perished.

This becomes clearer on entering the houses—those of Cornelius Rufus, Marcus Lucretius, the Casa Nuova, and the house of Sallust. They are small, and the apartments are yet smaller. They are designed expressly for enjoying cool air and to sleep in; man passed his days elsewhere—in the forum, in the baths, and at the theatre. Private life, so important to us, was then much curtailed; the essential thing was public life. There is no trace of chimneys, and certainly there were but few articles of

furniture. The walls are painted in red and black, a contrast which produces a pleasing effect in a semi-obscurity; arabesques of a charming airiness abound everywhere—Neptune and Apollo building the walls of Troy, a Triumph of Hercules, exquisite little cupids, dancing females apparently flying through the air, young girls inclining against columns, and Ariadne discovered by Bacchus. What vigour, what ingenuousness in all these youthful forms! Sometimes the panel contains only a graceful sinuous border, and in its centre a griffin. The subjects are merely indicated, corresponding to our painted wall-papers; but what a difference! Pompeii is an antique St. Germain or Fontainebleau, by which one easily sees the gulf separating the old and the new worlds.

Almost everywhere in the centre of the house is a garden like a large saloon, and in the middle of this a marble basin, a fountain flowing into it, and the whole enclosed within a portico of columns. What could be more charming, and simple, and better disposed for the warm hours of the day? With green leaves visible between two white columns, red tiles against the blue of the sky, the murmuring water sparkling among flowers like a jet of liquid pearls, and those shadows of porticoes intersected by the powerful light; is there a more congenial place for the body to grow freely, for healthy meditation, and to enjoy, without ostentation or affectation, all that is most beautiful in nature and in life? Some of these fountains bear lions' heads, and sprightly statuettes of children, with lizards, dogs, and fauns grouped around their margins. In the most capacious of all these houses, that of Diomed, orange and lemon trees, similar, probably, to those of ancient days, are putting forth their fresh green buds; a fishpool gleams brightly, and a small colonnade encloses a summer dining-room, the whole embraced within the

square of a grand portico. The more the imagination dwells on the social economy of antiquity, the more beautiful it seems, and the more conformable to the climate and the nature of man. The women had their *gynæceum* in the rear behind the court and portico, a secluded retreat with no external communication, and entirely separated from public life. They were not very active in their small apartments; they indulged in indolent repose, like Italian ladies of the present day, or employed themselves on woollen fabrics, awaiting a father's or husband's return from the business and converse of men. Wandering eyes passed carelessly over obscure walls, dimly discerning, not pictures, as in our day, plastering them, not archæological curiosities, and works of a different art and country; but figures repeating and beautifying ordinary attitudes, such as retiring to and arising from bed, the siesta, and various avocations; goddesses surrounding Paris, a Fortune, slender and elegant, like the females of Primaticcio, or a Deidamia frightened and falling backward on a chair. Habits, customs, occupations, dress, and monuments, all issue from one and a unique source; the human plant grew but on one stalk, which stalk had never been grafted. At the present time the civilisation of the same land, here, at Naples, is full of incongruities, because it is older, and is made up of the contributions of diverse races. Spanish, Catholic, feudal, and northern traits generally commingle here, to confuse and deform a primitive, pagan, Italian sketch. Naturalness, accordingly, and ease have vanished; all is grimace. Out of all one sees at Naples, how much of it is really indigenous? A love of comfort, dress-coats, lofty edifices, and industrial craft, have all come from the North. Were man true to his instincts he would live here as the ancients did, that is to say, half-naked or clad in mantles of linen. Ancient civilisation grew out of the climate, and a race

appropriate to the climate, and this is why it was harmonious and beautiful.

The theatre crowns the summit of a hill; its seats are of Parian marble; in front is Vesuvius, and the sea radiant with morning splendour. Its roof was an awning, which, again, was sometimes wanting. Compare this with our nocturnal edifices, lighted by gas and filled with a mephitic atmosphere, where people pile themselves up in gaudy boxes ranged in rows like suspended cages; you then appreciate the difference between a gymnastic natural life with atheletic forms, and our complicated artificial life with its dress-coats. The impression is the same in the majestic amphitheatre exposed to the sun, except that here is the blot of antique society, the Roman imprint of blood. The same impression you find in the baths; the red cornice of the *frigidarium* is full of charming airy little cupids, bounding away on horses or conducting chariots. Nothing is more agreeable and better understood than the drying-room, with its vault covered with small figures in relief in rich medallions, and a file of Hercules ranged round the wall, their vigorous shoulders supporting the entablature. All these forms live and are healthy; none are exaggerated or overloaded. What a contrast on comparing with this our modern bathhouse, with its artificial, insipid nudities, its sentimental and voluptuous designs. The bathhouse nowadays is a washroom; in former times it was a pleasant retreat and a gymnastic institution.* Several hours of the day were devoted to it: the muscles got to be supple and the skin brilliant; man here savoured of the voluptuous animality which permeated his alternately braced and mollified flesh; he lived not only through the head, as now, but through the body.

* Ἡ γυμναστική. We have no term by which to designate an art embracing all that related to the perfection of the naked animal.

We descend and leave the city by the Street of Tombs. These tombs are almost entire; nothing can be nobler than their forms, nothing more solemn without being lugubrious. Death was not then surrounded with the torments of ascetic superstition, with ideas of hell; in the mind of the ancients it was one of the *offices* of man, simply a termination of life, a serious and not a terrible thing, which one regarded calmly and not with the shuddering doubts of Hamlet. The ashes and images of their ancestors were preserved in their dwellings; they saluted them on entering, and the living maintained intercourse with them; at the entrance of a city tombs were ranged on both sides of the street, and seemed to be the primitive, the original city of its founders. Hippias, in one of Plato's dialogues, says that 'that which is most beautiful for a man is to be rich, healthy, and honoured by Greeks, to attain old age, to pay funeral honours to his parents when they die, and himself to receive from his children a fitting and magnificent burial.'

The truest history would be that of the five or six ideas that rule in the mind of man—how an ordinary man, two thousand years ago, regarded death, fame, well-being, country, love, and happiness. Two ideas controlled ancient civilisation; the first, that of man, and the second, that of the city: to fashion a fine animal, agile, temperate, brave, hardy, and complete, and this through physical exercise and selection of good stock; and then to construct a small exclusive community, containing in its bosom all that man loved and respected, a kind of permanent camp with the exigences of continual danger; —these were the two ideas that gave birth to all the rest.

CHAPTER IV.

THE MUSEO BORBONICO—THE PAINTINGS, SCULPTURES, MANNERS, CUSTOMS, AND RELIGION OF ANTIQUITY—MODERN PICTURES, AND THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

The Museo Borbonico.—Most of the paintings of Pompeii and Herculaneum have been removed to the Museo at Naples. These consist principally of mural decorations, and generally without perspective, there being one or two figures on a dark background, with now and then animals, slight landscape views, and sections of architecture. The colouring is feeble, it being scarcely more than indicated, or rather subdued, effaced, and not by time (for I have seen quite fresh pictures), but designedly. To attract the eye was not an aim in these somewhat sombre apartments; they delighted in an attitude or form of the body, the mind being entertained with healthy and poetic images of physical activity. I have derived more pleasure from these paintings than from the most celebrated of the Renaissance epoch. There is more nature, more life in them.

The subjects have no particular interest, consisting ordinarily of a male or female figure nearly nude, raising an arm or a leg; Mars and Venus, Diana finding Endymion, Briseis conducted by Agamemnon, and the like, dancers, fauns, centaurs, a warrior bearing away a female, who, so carried, is so much at her ease! Nothing more is requisite, because you feel at once their beauty and

repose. You cannot comprehend, before seeing it, how many charming attitudes a half-draped figure, floating in the air, can present to you; how many ways a veil can be raised, a flowing tunic arranged, a limb projected, and a breast exposed. The painters of these pictures enjoyed a unique advantage, one which no others have possessed, even those of the Renaissance, of living amidst congenial social customs, of constantly seeing figures naked and draped in the amphitheatre and in the baths, and besides this, of cultivating the corporeal endowments of strength and fleetness of foot. They alluded to fine breasts, well-set necks, and muscular arms as we of the present day do to expressive countenances and well-cut pantaloons.

Two bronze statuettes among these paintings are masterpieces. One, called a Narcissus, is a young shepherd, nude, and bearing a goatskin slung over his shoulder; it might be called an Alcibiades, so ironic and aristocratic is the smile and the turn of the head; the feet are covered with the cnemid, and the fine chest, neither too full nor too spare, falls to the hips in a beautiful waving line. Such were Plato's youths, educated in the gymnasium; such, Charmides, a scion of the best families, whose footsteps his companions followed because of his beauty and his resemblance to a god. The other is a satyr, also nude, and more virile, dancing with his head thrown back, and with an incomparable expression of gaiety. It may be said that nobody by the side of these people ever so felt and comprehended the human form. This feeling and knowledge were nourished by an *ensemble* of surrounding social habits and ideas. Special conditions had to exist in order to evolve an ideal of humanity out of a nude human being happy in simple existence, and yet lacking none of man's grander intellectual characteristics. For this reason the centre of Greek art is not painting, but sculpture.

There is still another reason, which is that a pose was then practicable. To assume an attitude is, to-day, an effort and an act of vanity, but not so formerly. A Greek, in his leisure moments leaning against a column of the *palestrum* and contemplating youths exercising, or listening to a philosopher posed well because, first, he had acquired full mastery of every part of his body, and next, through aristocratic pride. Imposing demeanour, and that grave, noble aspect described by philosophers, belong to a noble society composed of men owning slaves, making war, and discussing laws; there is no need to strive after it; its natural and permanent source is man's consciousness of his importance, courage, independence, and dignity. Look at the easy deportment of the young intelligent English nobles of the present day, and of the well-bred men of the highest French families; society, however, now renders the young Englishman too stiff, and the young Frenchman too careless; in antiquity it rendered the youth calm and sedate. We form some idea of this easy bearing from Plato, who opposes to the bustle, the ruses, the shoutings, the slave characteristics of the man of business, the natural repose of the free man, who confines himself to the deliberate discussion of general questions, who takes up and drops a subject at pleasure, 'who knows how to adjust his garments becomingly, and who, with unerring tact, following the harmony of philosophic discourse, celebrates the true life of gods and of immortals.'

In promenading these silent halls alone for a few hours, the illusion grows on you. So many mementoes of the past render it, to a certain extent, present and palpable. And especially this assembly of white statues, which, in this cold grey atmosphere, like that of a subterranean gallery, resembles the *manes* who, in mysterious realms underground, maintain a sombre invisible existence; or,

again, the inhabitants of those vacant circles whom Goethe, the great pagan, places around living and tangible beings. Here are heroes and queens, 'those that have acquired a name, or who have aspired to some noble end,' the *élite* of extinct generations; here have they descended with 'grave deportment, taking their places before the throne of powers whom no man has fathomed. Even in Hades they maintain a proud, dignified attitude, ranging themselves alongside of their equals, the familiar associates of Persephone,' whilst the ignorant multitude, the souls of the vulgar, 'assigned to the depths where are the fields of Asphodel, among tall poplars, and on sterile pasture-ground, hum sadly like bats or spectres, and are no longer men.' Only do ideal forms escape the engulfment of time, and pepetuate for us perfect works and perfect thoughts.

One forgets himself in the presence of such noble heads, before these stern Junos, these Venuses, these Minervas, these broad breasts of heroic gods, this grave human head of Jupiter. One of these heads, a Juno, is almost masculine, similar to that of a proud contemplative young man. I always returned to a colossal Flora, standing in the middle of the hall, draped so as to reveal her forms, but of such an austere dignified simplicity. She is a veritable goddess; and how superior to the Madonnas, the skeletons, and ascetic sufferers like St. Bartholomew or St. Jerome! A head and an attitude of this stamp are *moral*, but not in a Christian sense; they do not inspire sentiments of mystic, painful resignation, but a desire to support life courageously, firmly, and calmly, with the proud consciousness of possessing a superior nature. I cannot enumerate or describe all these heads; what I feel is, that of all the arts sculpture is the most Greek, and for this reason, that it displays a pure type, an abstract physical personage, form in itself,

as a fine race and a gymnastic life have moulded it; and because it shows it independent of a group, and not subjected to expression and moral disturbances, with nothing to divert attention from it, and before the passions have disfigured it or subordinated its activity. This is, with the Greeks, the ideal type of man, such as their social and moral conceptions sought to develop him. His nudity is not indecent, but with them a distinctive trait, the prerogative of their race, the condition of their culture, the accompaniment of their great national and religious ceremonial. At the Olympic games the athletes wear no clothing; Sophocles, fifteen years old, strips himself to sing the pæon after the victory of Salamina. We of to-day sculpture nudities only through pedantry or hypocrisy; they sculptured them in order to express a primitive, honest conception of the nature of man. This glorious conception followed them even into debauchery; the paintings in their haunts of vice, as in the *lupanars* of Pompeii, exhibit forms full and robust, without voluptuous insipidity or seductive softness; with them love is not a debasement of the senses or an ecstasy of the soul, but a function. Between the brute and the god, which Christianity opposes one to the other, they place man, who reconciles both. Hence their reason for painting him, and especially for carving his form in sculpture. Undoubtedly they implored images, according to the superstitious instincts of southern races, as their descendants nowadays implore the saints; they prayed to Diana and the healing Apollo; they burned incense before them, and poured out libations, as people now present *ex-votos* and wax candles to the Madonna and St. Januarius. They too had their sacred statuary in the recesses of their dwellings and in small oratorios specially adapted to them; they repeated in their statues consecrated attitudes and attributes, a Venus Anadyomene, a

Bacchus sleeping, as the paintings of the sixteenth century represent St. Catherine on her wheel, and St. Paul holding a sword, only the effect was different as the spectacle was different. In the passing glance they bestowed on these, instead of being affected by a bony figure or a bleeding heart, they were sensitive to a fine round shoulder, the arched back of an athlete, and a warrior's powerful chest; and on these images, accumulating from infancy, their mind dwelt, forging for itself the type of man. All this thus spoke to them: 'Behold thyself as thou shouldst be, as thou shouldst drape thyself! Strive to obtain flexible muscles and firm robust flesh! Bathe thyself, frequent the *palestrum*, be strong on all occasions in behalf of thy city and friends!' Works of art of the present time do not address us in this fashion; we do not go naked, and we are not citizens; our spokesman is Faust and Werther, or rather some late Parisian romance or the Songs of Heine.

It now remains for me to cite a few works without which the foregoing would be somewhat obscure. The following are five or six of the most celebrated.

The Farnesian Hercules is a vigorous porter, having just lifted a piece of timber, and thinking that a glass of wine would not come amiss. It is much too literal and vulgar; he is not a god but an ox-killer.

The Farnesian Bull. Amphion and Zethes, obeying their mother Antiope, bind Dirce to the horns of a bull. This work seems to belong to the second or third era of sculpture. There are four figures of life-size, besides the bull, some dogs, and a child. This is a picture or a drama; the sculptor has sought to tell a story, to excite pathetic interest. All the arts lower themselves in departing from their appropriate sphere.

There is a superb head of a horse in bronze. Like all admirable Greek horses, this one shows he is not yet a

victim to training; his spirit is intact; he has the short neck, intelligent eye, and exuberant will of undisciplined horses still observable on our landes or in the north of Scotland. This horse is a personage; ours are machines.

The charming Naples Psyche. This refined youthful torso, with its delicate *distingué* head, is likewise not of the great epoch of sculpture; and still less the Venus Callipygis, apparently a boudoir ornament, reminding one of the pretty license of our eighteenth century.

There are innumerable statues and busts of actual personages in marble and in bronze; a seated Agrippina, sad and energetic; nine statues of the Balba family; an admirable standing orator, preoccupied with the gravity of what he is about to utter, a veritable statesman, and worthy of the antique tribune; Tiberius, Titus, Antonine, Hadrian, and Marcus Aurelius, all emperors and consuls, with statesmen's heads and a business-like aspect like our modern cardinals. On approaching nearer to our own times we find art inclining to mere portraiture; objects are not ennobled but imitated; the faces of Sextus Empiricus and Seneca look excited, anxious, and ugly, strikingly real, like plaster casts. Our Musée Campana at Paris shows that on reaching the centuries of degeneracy sculpture ended in the reproduction of morbid personal defects, such as deformities and nervous contortions, and other insignificant traits—like the *bourgeois* characters of Henri Monnier photographed to the life.

Modern Pictures.—There are, I believe, seven or eight hundred pictures in this collection. I, who am not a painter, can only give the impressions of a man to whom painting affords much pleasure, and who sees in it, moreover, a complement of history.

Raphael has several portraits, that of a cardinal, one of the chevalier Tibaldo, and another of Leo X. The Leo X. is a big sanctimonious personage, tolerably vulgar, and the

more strikingly so contrasted with the acolytes by his side, two crafty thoughtful ecclesiastics. Raphael's superiority is observable in his perfectly healthy and just perceptions; his portraits give us the essence of a man, without any affectation.

Ribera.—A drunken Silenus, with a huge paunch, the chest of Vitellius, and dark features as low and cunning in expression as those of an inquisitive Sancho, and with horribly crooked legs: a strong light and surrounding shadows render all this brighter and more salient, and as a trumpet-blast to this brutal insignificance, this savage energy, a jackass is braying with all his might.

Guercino.—His charming Magdalen, nude to the waist, is in the most graceful attitude, has the most beautiful hair, the most beautiful breasts, and the sweetest, tenderest, scarcely perceptible smile of dreamy melancholy; she is the gentlest and most captivating of lovers, and is contemplating a crown of thorns! How remote from the simplicity and vigour of the preceding age! The reign of pastorals, sigisbes, and devout sentimentality has commenced; this Magdalen is related to the Herminias and Sophronias and the gentle heroines of Tasso, and, with them, is born out of the Jesuitical reformation.

Leonardo da Vinci.—A Virgin and Child of extraordinary *finesse*. Her eyes are downcast, and a strange mysterious smile slightly draws the lip; the face is disturbed with the emotion of a delicate, sensitive spirit of great intellectual refinement; behind the head appears a blooming lily. This artist is wholly modern, infinitely in advance of his age; through him the Renaissance and our own epoch touch without an interval. He is already a *savant*, an experimentalist, an investigator, a sceptic, to which may be added the possession of the grace of a woman, and the chagrined heart of a man of genius.

Several works by Parmegiano are of rare distinction, among which are some heads, long and elegant, and among them that of a modest candid young girl, bearing an expression of astonishment. A large portrait represents a grandee of the day, evidently a man of letters, a connoisseur and a soldier; he wears a red cap, and his cuirass lies in one corner; his noble face is delicate and dreamy, the hair and beard being abundant and of remarkable beauty; a more aristocratic head could not be imagined. You observe in this head the peculiarly mild expression of a student; he is a captain, a thinker, and a man of the world. Parmegiano lived in the first half of the sixteenth century, about the commencement of the decline of Italy. What genius and culture among the men of that day, subject to the oppressing influences of degeneracy! Read the 'Courtier' of Castiglione, if you would obtain an idea of the polished, creative society imbued with philosophy, and liberal in spirit, then perishing.

Its two destroyers are here, both painted by Titian; Philip II., pale, stiff, irresolute, and with blinking eyes, a formal pedant such as the Venetian despatches describe him; and the other Pope Paul III., with a large white beard, and the air of a brooding wolf. There is another pope by Sebastian del Piombo, with handsome regular features, but black like the waters of a turbid stream, and looking obliquely out of half-closed eyes. Various pictures complete this train of ideas; for example, that by Micco Spadaro, entitled 'The Submission of Naples to Don John of Austria.' War was tragic enough in those days: we know how the Spaniards treated their reconquered cities in Flanders. On the market place and all along the street dense masses of soldiers stand with pikes in hand, and muskets planted in their rests, awaiting the word of command; flags float from rank to rank; the vanquished city is overwhelmed by force and terror.

Humbly on their knees the magistrates present its keys, and on the pedestal of the statute of the viceroy, demolished by the revolutionary populace, and stretched along its white base, are severed heads staining it with their dripping blood; high mournful houses behind it cast lugubrious shadows, and in the background rises a great barrier of mountains. Eight years after this the plague comes, and 50,000 persons at Naples die of it; the Carthusian monastery alone is preserved, through the intercession of its founder, and a second picture by the same artist represents this singular scene. You see in the air St. Martin and the Virgin arresting the vengeful arm of Christ, whilst an angel standing on the ground drives off the pestilence in the shape of a hideous old hag. All around are kneeling monks of the order, a set of vulgar heads, depending upon their patron who has taken their business in hand.

One day two shepherd boys were expressing their wishes. One exclaimed, on breaking a piece of dry bread, 'If I was king, I would eat nothing but fat;' the other, who was out of breath chasing hogs, exclaimed, 'If I was king, I would watch my beasts on horseback.' Now, if I were king, I would transport all these portraits and historical subjects to my closet, and avail myself of them in acquiring a knowledge of history.

Painters of the second and third rank abound here; namely, Schidone, Luca Giordano, Preti, and Josepin, all of them really great men. Any of the charming well-developed vigorous female figures in the works of Lanfranco, a pupil of Guido, leaves far in the background our contemporary art, so elaborate, so incomplete, so largely composed of abortive experiments or painful imitation. Their figures are instinct with life; they have suitable, well-proportioned limbs; there is ease, force, and completeness in the structure of the body and in its groupings.

Their heads are filled with colours and forms which flow out naturally and copiously, and readily diffuse themselves on their canvases. Luca Giordano, so traduced and so rapid in execution, is a genuine painter; the animation of his figures, and his gracefully moulded forms, with his foreshortenings and silk draperies, and the action and vivacity of his style, all announce the genius of his art, that is to say, his *ability to please the eye.* He belongs to a different thinking stratum from ours; he was not nourished on philosophy and literature, and did not, like Delacroix, aspire to portray soul-tragedies, or, like Décamps, to express the outward world of nature, or, like so many others, to make pictures out of archæology and history.

The Danäe, by Titian. This artist, certainly, had no æsthetic system; all he cared for was to paint a splendid woman, a superb patrician's mistress. This head is quite vulgar—nothing beyond the voluptuous; it is probably that of some fisherman's daughter, willing to live idly, feed well, and wear pearl necklaces. But what flesh tones relieving on that white linen, and on that golden hair in such wild disorder about the throat! What a perfect hand projecting from that diamond bracelet, and what beautiful fingers and a yielding form! There is another on a neighbouring canvas by an unknown artist superior in character, with the hand resting over the head, a flowering plant by her side, and in the distance a landscape of blue mountains. She is grave, and her serious expression, like that of animals, is slightly tinged with melancholy. This is what ennobles this style of art. Voluptuousness here is not indelicate, because it is perfectly natural; man does not lower himself to it, for he is on a level with it, while the grandeur of the scenery, coupled with the magnificence of the architecture and a serene sky, throw around it the charms of

poetry. Man thus completes himself; it is one of the five or six great developments of existence. This one does not suffer by comparison; it is as it ought to be, finished, perfect; to reduce it, to purify it, would be to take away its essential beauty, to injure a rare flower the like of which no other civilisation ever produced; one might as well insist on the tulip possessing a less ardent hue, or the rose a less exquisite fragrance. In front of this, and by an inferior hand, is a Venus and Adonis, the former being fat and ruddy, with cheeks and mouth somewhat overcharged with colour, and naked, except a strip of thin drapery, panting with desire and incapable of imagining anything nobler. And why not? Who would wish her otherwise in this warm shadow, so deliciously imprisoning the amber tones of her fine form trembling in this warm light, palpitating like water in the glow of sunset, resting on that rich red mantle with that golden overturned vase by her side sending forth its brilliant reflections? Every great school of art is an existence in its own right, the same as every natural group of mortals. If systems suffer we do not.

CHAPTER V.

SOCIAL STATE—POLITICS, SCIENCE, AND RELIGION.

Conversations.—In the cafés, in the railway carriages, and in the drawing-rooms politics forms the substance of all discourse. Minds seem to be in a state of ebullition; there is apparently the same ardour and vivacity, and the same convictions as with us in 1790. The newspapers, which are very numerous, widely diffused, and cheap, exhibit the same tone. For example:—

I passed my first evening with a sculptor and a physician. According to these gentlemen, the brigands to the south (which prevents me from visiting Pæstum) are simply brigands. They kill, burn, and rob. Brigandage is a profession, and a very good profession; they even practise it on people of their own party. If they are denounced, they set fire to the dwelling of the informer, and so terrorise over the villages. In addition to this, it requires, in such mountains and thickets, a hundred soldiers to catch one man. 'Is it not a Vendée?' I ask. 'No; the comparison is unworthy.' 'Nevertheless the country is Catholic, and the people are imaginative and fanatical?' 'No: it is nothing but a land of brigands.' Thereupon my friends become excited; they see only one idea, and are inflated, like our early revolutionists, by newspaper phrases: resentment is ready, and their hopes are infinite.

According to them, again, the existing evil comes from France, which, in maintaining the Pope at Rome, upholds a hotbed of intrigue. Rome is an abscess affect-

ing the entire body. For sixty years France has made immense progress in science and in general prosperity, but none in religion or morality; she is as low as she ever was in her subserviency to the clergy. Here comes in a flood of eighteenth century phrases.

'The struggle in Italy, they say, is between education and ignorance. The intelligent class is wholly liberal—the middle class, be it understood. The nobles are obstinate: look at the great aristocratic *faubourg* on the road to Herculaneum, all the houses of which are shut up. The populace of Naples, to which the Bourbons granted every license, are not content, and if the Austrians should return there would be violence; but the true people, the artisans, the men who at bottom are honest and who labour, are slowly rallying. If there were four of these in the retrograde party the day after the Revolution, there are only two to-day. Liberty is producing its effect. The army, especially, is a school of union, instruction, and honour. The soldiers are learning to read and to write; they hear people talk about Garibaldi, Victor Emmanuel, and love of country. Families are no longer made miserable, as formerly, by having their children torn from them. There are men of every class in the ranks; sons of peasants march side by side with the sons of lawyers and of doctors. Military substitution is difficult: a man knowing how to read, write, and calculate, must furnish another knowing how to read, write, and calculate: the son of a certain noble, unable to find a substitute of this kind, had to go himself. A great war like that of 1792 is wanted to concentrate all these diversities through the confraternity of arms. Your nation is a great one,' they add; 'you have emancipated yourselves from slavery; you do not suffer the hundred thousand infamies and miseries of the Bourbon *régime*. You can comprehend how we also need our Revolution.'

Another conversation with a man about thirty in a railway carriage, a cotton-broker. He is scouring the environs, and buying up crops to resell to the English, the country round Vesuvius being now planted with cotton.

According to him, 'they have in his line for three years past made astonishing progress. Under the Bourbons it was impossible to do anything, even to sell or to buy. There was no commerce whatever; they were averse to contracts with strangers, and discouraged the entry and export of merchandise. Now that we are free everything is different. The peasant, sure of earning money, sows and works, even in summer. At midday he rests, the heat being terrible; but at evening and in the morning, during the supportable hours, he goes into the field. Under the Bourbons people did not and could not do but three things—drink, eat, and occasionally amuse themselves; there was complete prohibition in every other respect; no study, no newspapers, and no discussion of religion or politics; denunciations were perpetual, and imprisonments frightful; one felt himself liable at any moment to the touch of the hand of an inquisitor. Let us have twenty years to ourselves, and you will see what a change there will be!'

He had travelled in the South, and stated that 'the brigands form a sort of *chouannerie*,* but of a low order. The peasant is not very hostile to them, because he is ignorant and superstitious. Besides, it is impossible to penetrate the *boschi* where they conceal themselves, and Rome is constantly sending them recruits.'

Everywhere brigands, nobody speaks of anything else. According to the Liberal newspapers, 'they are fit only for

* In the war of La Vendée, during the Revolution in France, the peasantry whose sentiments were in favour of the Bourbons were called *chouans*, and organised attempts at insurrection *chouanneries*.—Tr.

the galleys,' while, according to the clerical journals, 'they are insurgent martyrs.' Desiring to form an opinion for myself, I read the diary of General Borgès, a Spaniard and a Bourbonite, who recently traversed the kingdom of Naples from end to end, but who was taken and shot a few leagues from the Roman frontier. After reading this the following facts may be depended on. Borgès was a sort of Vendean, and he had with him some honest persons, for instance, his officers. He encounters a certain number of Bourbonites, shepherds, peasantry, and former soldiers, but a very small number. The bands supporting him, and holding the country before his landing, are composed of robbers and assassins, who repeatedly, on taking a town or hamlet, kill, pillage, and maltreat, and carry on war like savages. The national guard and the well-to-do people are everywhere against them.

My hostess at Sorrento said to me, 'Here and in the neighbourhood you will find three Piedmontese for one Bourbonite; but over there, to the South, there are three Bourbonites for one Piedmontese.' All this is easily understood.

Here is another conversation at Castellamare, this time with a retired subordinate officer; he is a fanatic, and speaks with the air of one trying to make converts. He says 'that priests are the authors of all the trouble; that in France they are pious and honest, but that here they are robbers and assassins, and that the head-quarters of their conspiracies is at Rome. He cites the famous General Manhès under Murat, who, in order to starve out brigands, forbade, under penalty of death, a morsel of bread being taken outside the towns, and on a priest leaving to take the host to a dying man, had him shot, *col santissimo nella mano.*' He showed me the way to a celebrated chapel, and, on my entering, shrugged his

shoulders in a significant manner. Is it not curious, after a lapse of sixty years, to encounter Jacobins!

The more I read the newspapers, the more I talk with people, the more do I find the resemblance striking. We also, at first, had only a liberal middle-class; the national property had to be sold, and a foreign invasion take place in order to rally our peasanty to the Revolution. We also battled with an intestine insurrection, and witnessed a civil war in the most ignorant and most religious section of the country. We also improvised schools, a national guard, an army, and legal tribunals. We also beheld nobles emigrate with the king, and, later, seclude themselves sullenly on their estates. Here it is the small edition of a great work; but the new volume is not yet stitched—its sheets hold together badly. Before it can acquire consistency like ours it must undergo a ten years' grinding process under heavy burdens, or, in other words, dread the interference of strangers.

An evening with Magistrates, Professors, and Literary men.—The greatest obstacle here in the way of the Government is the large number of privileged persons maintained under the Bourbons, and who are now out of place. For example, there was a large manufactory of iron fabrics, which cost the Government two millions a year, and which yielded nothing; the workmen had gradually been replaced by sons of officers or by *employés* receiving five francs a day as locksmiths, overseers, &c., and who only came at the end of the month to receive their pay, a small number making their appearance in the bureaux between the hours of eleven and three. The Revolution occurred, and their wages were stopped. They made a great noise, however, and were paid. The manufactory is found to be too costly, and it is put up at auction. Nobody appears to bid. Finally, a bold speculator agrees to take it for ten years, and pay a rent of

48,000 ducats. Assembling the *employés* and pretended workmen, the new master says to them, 'I will pay you as formerly, but on condition that you do the work of a full day.' This is greeted with shouts and reclamations. 'Very well, then, work as you please, and I will pay you by the hour.' This is followed by a riot. The *bersaglieri* are welcomed with stones, to which the workmen retort with shot. Since that time order is restored, and the manufactory begins to operate, the famished sinecurists meanwhile being furious. One of these said to me, 'Look at this miserable Piedmontese Government! I held a position of 1,200 francs a year, which left me free the whole day, so that I could attend to business in another place at a bankers. Now that I am married and have two children, these rascals suppress it!' So was it in 1791 with the household officers of the king, queen, dauphin, and princes, the *ménins* (foster-brothers), captains, masters of the hounds, &c.

King Ferdinand, like Louis XV., meddled with State supplies. His effective army consisted of ninety-five thousand men; a hundred thousand were put in the budget, and he appropriated the surplus to himself. Besides this he reserved for himself, his favourites, and his secretaries, the right of making appointments: there were consequently two sorts of office-holders, the fat one, who came monthly to the bureau to get his pay, and the lean one, who performed the service, and got a quarter of the remuneration.

These people are all greatly irritated, which is not strange. The priests likewise are in no better humour, and they have no reason to be. They have lost credit, and no longer take the wall. Three years ago there were so many monks and ecclesiastics at Naples, that a lady in the house in which I lodged, in a frequented street, stood at a window and counted a hundred per hour passing it.

Almost every family numbered one son an ecclesiastic. To-day they are not so numerous. After the Revolution they concealed themselves; but now they are again appearing, in companies of two or three, going out and taking their usual promenades. They think that the Government wants to starve them, and that in sequestrating convent property it declared itself their enemy; and they consequently are working against it, especially through the women.

There are fourteen thousand men in the national guard of Naples, which for a city numbering five hundred thousand inhabitants, is not a great number. They pretend that they might have double this number, which again is not a great deal. They state that the lower class is enormously large, and that it cannot yet be trusted with arms; it counts for nothing, and has yet to be instructed; besides, there is nothing to fear from it, as it is not capable of erecting barricades; three years ago, in the absence of all other authority, the national guard was amply sufficient to maintain order. The same state of things exists in the municipalities; the captains prefer to enrol only a few men; they do not accept half-way vagabonds, or those compromised with the former Government. Besides, the peasants are all armed, and walk about with guns on their shoulders—an old custom, the effect of the *vendetta* and of inveterate habits of brigandage. When Victor Emmanuel came they all crowded around him thus accoutred, which affords substantial proof of their not feeling themselves conquered or oppressed. A foreign ambassador present on that occasion remarked, 'Italy is made.'

I have to return to the national guard of fourteen thousand men. These figures simply indicate a governing *bourgeoisie*, and justify, up to a certain point, the declaration of its adversaries; such, for instance, as that of a fanatical, provincial Neapolitan marquis at Paris who,

in my presence, fifteen days ago, charged the national guard with being a coterie, calling them traitors and instruments of the Piedmontese, and declaring that both the nobles and the people, save a few deserters, were now bending beneath a yoke and indignantly murmuring. The reply to this is to make me read the clerical gazettes sold at Naples and in the streets, which repeat the same charges, only in stronger terms, thereby proving that nobody is gagged. Again, the garrison of Naples is six thousand men. Is this sufficient to keep down a city of five hundred thousand disposed to rebel? As to the means of gaining over the peasantry, they state that 'the Government does not possess, as the Convention did, an enormous amount of national property to sell to them; that, since the first Napoleon, the feudal *régime* has been abolished throughout the kingdom, and that already a great number of peasants have become proprietors. Meanwhile the confiscated property of the convents is to be disposed of, and the sale of this will rally to the support of the Revolution numerous purchasers; besides which, they can depend on new clearings and productions, and on the general increase of public wealth. The country is of marvellous fertility: the soil sometimes yields seven crops in a season, grapes, grains, vegetables, oranges, nuts, &c. For two years past the cultivation of cotton has increased on all sides, and the profits have been enormous; instead of eight or ten ducats the quintal, it has amounted to thirty-two and forty. Peasants now at the cafés pull dollars out of their pockets; they pay borrowed sums and mortgages; they begin to purchase land, which is a passion with them, and in some places one crop has proved sufficient to pay for the soil acquired. It has been remarked that for a long time brigandage is less frequent, and that there is more of labour in districts where small farms abound; and in this view of things Murat legis-

lated. Accordingly they are now beginning in various places to alienate and partition land. Add to this the mortmain tenures before mentioned, the influx of foreign capital, and that manufactures are being established, and newspapers diffused; also, as experience shows, that a Neapolitan learns to read and write in three months, no race being more subtle, more prompt in seizing on and comprehending ideas of all kinds. The peasant enriched and enlightened will become a Liberal.

One of the company present gives a recent conversation with a soldier. This man had served under the Bourbons. When Garibaldi landed with his little band, a report spread that he was accompanined with sixty thousand men, whereupon, with the consent of their captain, each member of the company laid down his arms and accoutrements and proceeded tranquilly homewards. On Victor Emmanuel being proclaimed, our friend encountered this man, and made him ashamed of himself, and, indicating him as a suitable recruit, had him re-enlisted. A year expired, and he met him again. This time the man is overjoyed and full of gratitude; he has a martial air, and he exclaims, 'Ah, your Excellence, how happy I am! I have been to Milan, Turin, and a good many other cities! And I know how to read!'

'And to write?' responds our friend.

'Not very well yet; but I can write my name.'

'Here,' says the gentleman, 'is a *piastre*; and when you shall have learned to write you shall have another.'

This man was transformed by military service; it disciplines a man, and creates habits of cleanliness, and instils into him sentiments of honour and love of country. Our friend, addressing another, remarked, 'You are going now to fight for the king.' 'No,' he replied, not for king, but for country: there is a parliament now.' They read newspapers, costing them a cent., and employ

the high-sounding terms which are often so vapid and so abused, but at this moment so true and noble and of such powerful effect. Two Italians in a railroad carriage with me, on coming in sight of Naples after five years' absence, remarked one to the other, 'They are improving; they are almost a moral people.'

They require time; time will consolidate all things, even the finances: at present these are the great sore. Last year the deficit was a million a day. They will improve gradually as the nation produces and consumes more. During the year just closed Naples disposed of cotton amounting to a hundred millions, and this year the crop will be still more valuable. Custom duties in the south used to produce very little, as smugglers had their own way; but now other officers have been installed, and an inspector, a brother of one of our friends, states that the increase this year will amount to seven hundred thousand ducats.

There is another sign of pacification. The Government has removed the Madonna boxes from the corners of the streets; these were often found in the morning marked with dagger-blows, given either by the Mazzinians or the Bourbonites, and they have accordingly been deposited in neighbouring churches. In certain quarters the women assemble and wring their hands, and indulge in lamentations, but in others this step is regarded favourably, for they were often desecrated by profanities and pollutions against the wall beneath them.

An interesting experiment is being tried here, and one worthy of close attention, that of a revolution less violent than our own, and less affected by foreign intervention; the same at bottom, since it involves the transformation of a feudal into a modern community, but differing in this respect, that the transformation goes on in a closed retort and without explosion; it is true, however,

that an Austrian bayonet would shatter the retort in pieces.

The same activity and exuberance is apparent in science and religion as in politics. The university contains ten thousand students and sixty professors. A student's lodging costs sixty francs per month, and he lives on macaroni, fruits, and vegetables; people in the country eat but little, and necessaries are consequently cheap. German erudition and methods prevail. Hegel is read with facility. M. Véra, his most zealous and best accredited interpreter, has a chair here. M. Spaventa is trying to discover an Italian philosophy, and shows Gioberti to be a sort of Italian Hegel. You thus see *amour-propre* and national prepossessions penetrating even into the realm of pure reason. Yesterday a newspaper warmly commended a modern Italian picture exhibited in the *Musée*, and complained of the Italians for not sufficiently admiring their own artists, and of committing the weakness of too greatly admiring foreign art. All this is naïve, but sincere.

Young people and the public generally take great interest in these researches. Naples is the land of Vico, and has always possessed philosophical aptitude. Lately a great crowd thronged to an exposition of the 'Phenomenology' of Hegel: they translate his technical terms and abstractions without any difficulty—and such abstractions! The system spreads from the centre to all its diverse branches. The law course is especially strong, and arranged wholly according to the German manner. The students are as yet confined to the formulas and classifications of Hegel, but the professors are begining to overstep these limits, and to pursue their own methods, each in his own fashion and according to his intellectual capacity. Ideas are still vague and floating, everything being in a state of formation.

Meanwhile one may question whether their food is well selected, and if fresh minds can assimilate such aliment; it is tough, ill-cooked meat: they feast on it with youthful appetites as the scholastics of the twelfth century devoured Aristotle, in spite of the disproportion and the danger of indigestion and even of strangling. A cultivated foreigner who has resided here for the past ten years replies to me that the most difficult reasoning and all German dissertations are comprehended naturally, but that French books are much less so. If they read Voltaire's romances, they find but little amusement in them; they do not feel his grace, and regard his irony simply as a means of evading censure. M. Renan, whom they admire infinitely, seems to them timid: 'Why,' they ask, 'does he take so many precautions? he is a delicate restorer of Christianity.' His finished art, his tact, his sentiment, so poetic and comprehensive, escapes them entirely; they have translated his book, and ten thousand copies have been sold at Naples; they would consider it a privilege to see and to handle his autograph; but their admiration is for the combatant and not the critic. Hence the success of 'Le Maudit',* which title figures in the windows of every bookstore in Naples. They are delighted with heavy artillery of this description. They demand a vigorous attack, a bold exhibition of facts: they are avenging themselves of their former slavery.

There are no good periodicals: the fashion of penny papers prevails, and the editorial standard is in keeping. The telegraphic news of the morning is the first thing, and if enforced with a gross tirade all the better. They subject our French journals to this standard of criticism; they do not appreciate the quiet eloquence, concise style, and delicate irony of Prevost-Paradol, much preferring

* A well-known romance, purporting to narrate the experience of a Jesuit priest, and in which the practices of the Romish Church are exposed.—Tr.

the *premiers Paris* of the democratic organs. Let us bear in mind our own journals of 1789—their declamation, high-sounding terms, and empty rhetoric.

Whilst breakfasting yesterday at a café I observed in one of the penny papers a curious *feuilleton*, consisting of the fourth lecture of Professor Ferrari on the 'Philosophy of History,' in which ideas derived from the early investigations of Giannone in relation to religious history are expounded. According to Giannone, the early Christians were not believers in paradise; their fundamental dogma was the resurrection of the body: up to the resurrection the dead remained in a sort of state of passivity and expectancy. Theology, gradually developing, placed dead believers apart; soon St. Augustine awards them a preliminary semi-beatitude, and under Pope St. Gregory they ascend at once into heaven. Ideas like these, so freely explored and so widely popularised, must evidently produce a great effect.

The Jesuit College is now under the ban of Victor Emmanuel. In the street you see scholars belonging to various establishments, no longer led by a priest but by a sergeant. On this transformation, and on the increase of sources of public education, their strongest hopes are built. Fifty-eight public district-schools have been established in Naples, and one in each principal town. There are a great many readers amongst the middle class. All the interesting and learned productions of Germany, England, and France may be found at Detken's bookstore; all the best works on physiology, law, language, and especially philosophy, find purchasers: his store is a sort of literary and scientific club-room. To converse freely and on all-important subjects is for them the highest gratification. 'Three years ago,' they say, 'even with closed doors we dared not speak. Had we been seen collected together, a spy would have tracked us at once.'

They are now in all the ardour of production and of renaissance. A strong force is excavating Pompeii, and the new discoveries are published in magnificent form, illustrated with polychromatic drawings. It is a pleasure to look at their fine Italian heads and expressive eyes, and underneath a certain circumspect air, to detect the ardent glow within; they openly or tacitly express a profound joy, like that of a man on first moving his limbs after having been a long time confined in prison. In respect to ideas they do not lack suitable preparation; already under the Bourbons two or three booksellers made fortunes by smuggling and paying custom-house officials and inspectors, concealing their books under their beds, and disposing of them at quintuple rates. In this way excellent libraries were formed even in the provinces, for instance, that of the father of the poet Leopardi. This or that retired *bourgeois* or petty noble studied, not assuredly for fame or profit (because it was dangerous to be a *savant*), but to learn. They acquired accordingly much and quickly. I saw a young man twenty-one years old thus labouring by himself and for himself, who knew Sanscrit, Persian, and a dozen other tongues; who was conversant with Hegel, Spencer, Schopenhauer, Mill, and Carlyle, and with current French and German productions relating to law, philosophy, linguistic study, and exegesis. His erudition and comprehension are those of a man of forty. He is now going to complete his education by passing a year each at Paris and Berlin. These are noble germs; I trust there are many of them, and that they are increasing. But such achievements, and a delight in the conflict of ideas, are not all; it is necessary to produce, to carve out one's own way; for without invention there is no true culture. Several of my friends are somewhat concerned on this point; they regard this ebullition as superficial, viewing this new outburst of intellectual

activity as a kind of operatic display, a brilliant fairy spectacle to which speculative brains are abandoning themselves. 'A few erudites,' they say, 'import and accumulate mountains of foreign material: a curious crowd gathers around their plans, studying fac-similes and imitations of foreign models? Who is to conceive and execute the national monument?'

CHAPTER VI.

INTELLECTUAL AND OTHER TRAITS—SAN CARLO AND SAN CARLINO.

Streets, Promenades, and Theatres.—Most of the women are ordinary, but there are a large number of handsome, genteel, well-dressed young men. A friend who has travelled over Italy states that one encounters people in quite small towns who have dined on a bit of bread and cheese, but who wear new gloves, and seem apparently to have just left Dusautoy's establishment. It is a universal rule that the more a man thinks of the women the better he dresses.

Many among them have heads like those of Correggio, with a tranquilly voluptuous air, and a smile constantly blissful and serene. It is very pleasing, and it enables you to comprehend their amatory characteristics. When they address a woman this smile becomes more captivating and tenderer; there is no French piquancy or petulance in it; they seem to be enraptured, to relish with the keenest zest every word that drops from her mouth, one by one, like so many drops of honey. The light popular songs, the national music, and the operas of Cimerosa express the same sentiment.

Amongst the lower classes every young girl of fifteen has a lover; every young man of seventeen has one likewise, the passion with both being strong and enduring. Both intend marriage, and wait as long as is requisite,

which is until the young swain can purchase the principal article of furniture, an immense square bed.

Observe this, however, that he does not in the interval lead the life of a Trappist. No people are more given to pleasure, none are more precocious; at thirteen years of age a child is a man.

A young girl stands at her window, while a young man passes and repasses, and stands in the *porte-cochère*, both making signs to each other. In the street I live in is a certain window, half open; the lover in a vehicle ascends and descends the street thirty or forty times every afternoon, and then goes off to promenade on the Villa Reale. You may ask a young girl without impropriety if she has a lover. 'Certainly I have, otherwise I should be very ugly or very disagreeable.' 'But do you love him?' 'Yes: do you suppose I am heartless?'

Yesterday I witnessed an exact representation of these characteristics in the popular little theatre of San Carlino. The two female lovers were genuine Neapolitan grisettes, one piquant, and the other *grassotta*; both being vulgar, tempting, and extremely voluble and deafening in insults when their tongues were loosened. Love, amidst these popular weaknesses, flourishes like a rose rooted in cracked and broken pottery. A sweeter smile than that of Annarella when she finally accepts Andrea could not be imagined. Her beautiful teeth, her parted lips, her large eyes beaming with tender compliance and expanding with felicity, her entire being overflows with delight. There is no *finesse* or prudery as in France—nothing lackadaisical. He kisses her hand, yet he is a man of the people, almost of the lower class; but he has loved her for three years. Another pretty action follows, both tender and familiar: he places her hand on his head to take from it a lock of his hair.

It is impossible for these people to think of anything

else: love is the dominant idea; it is inspired both by the climate and the landscape. This is easily understood and, better still, felt as soon as one has passed an hour on the sea. From the bark, on the way to Pausilippo, villas and palaces are visible, extending down into the glowing waves; some have foundations under which the waters flow. Terraced gardens descend to the brink filled with the olive, the orange, the Indian fig, and festoons of clinging vines that conceal the nudity of the rocks. On the heights appear the round tops of the Italian pine, relieving black against the bright clear sky. Naples recedes, and as it becomes more remote seems to be a vast white hive. Vesuvius expands and displays its amplitude. Blue covers all; the sea, the sky, and the earth are simply azure; and the delicate gradations of its tints only render this concert of colour the more delectable. The mountains resemble in hue the throat of a turtle-dove, the sea is of the colour of a silken robe, and the firmament a pale velvety texture sparkling with luminousness. Alone, afar off, a group of white sails appears like a bevy of sea-gulls. A light breeze kisses the cheeks, and the bark dances. You banish thought; you are only sensible of the balmy caressing atmosphere, and of the gentle swelling of the waves.

These amours are not always of a placid type. Day before yesterday I saw a girl descend from a vehicle with three large gashes on her cheeks, bestowed upon her by her lover, in order to prevent her from pleasing a rival. It often happens that a girl thus scarred espouses the offender and exonerates him before the magistrate. 'It's my fault; he was jealous; I provoked him.' It seems as if their nerves were stimulated by the irregularities of the climate, and that they improvise blows as well as other matters. There are a good many unpreme-

ditated murders of this class: the punishment is twenty years in prison.

In all things with these people the first impression is too violent; scarcely is the trigger touched when the explosion takes place; the effect is terrible, but more frequently grotesque. Hawkers with their merchandise resemble lunatics. This morning, during my breakfast, a vendor of knickknacks expended more breath and gesture in half an hour than any two comic actors in two or three months. He shoved his *bric-à-brac* into the hands of the crowd, blew shell trumpets, balanced toy watches in his hands to test their weight, and pretended to listen to their seeming tick-tick, assuming a lachrymose whining tone of voice in order to get an extra *grano*; he put on airs of admiration before dolls; all of which puffing and blowing I am satisfied was as much a pleasure to him as of any advantage to his traffic; it is one of the ways for discharging surplus steam. Two cabmen get into a quarrel and seem ready to burst; a minute after, and all is forgotten. The love of tinselry proceeds from the same source. Mules are decked with tufts of colour, vehicles with complicated brass ornaments, and hearses with borders of gilt; women cannot dispense with gold chains, and poor girls place over their rags plaid shawls and scarlet handkerchiefs figured with flowers. The imagination thus sparkles and explodes without.

Accordingly things are quickly and easily done, and without timidity or awkwardness. My Castellamare coachman was an orator; the only difficulty I had was to make him keep quiet. An ordinary woman converses with you, gives you advice, and corrects your pronunciation; she feels herself on familiar terms with you, and not at all inferior. Sometimes demonstrations of respect are made, but they are on the surface; such a thing is incompatible with such a character. Man is too much at

his ease, too active, to feel embarrassed or constrained before anybody or anything.

The people have many good qualities. Two strangers residing here, one of whom is the superintendent of a factory, praises them after having employed them for ten years. They are passionately fond of their children. On the father's return from fishing, the mother brings them to him, and he lifts them in his arms, kisses and caresses them, and makes all sorts of faces at them. They love all children, and not merely their own offspring; they are affected by their beauty and innocence and pretty ways; it is poetry, and they feel it. When Monsieur B—— is absent, the workmen of the establishment caress and sympathise with his children, and sometimes with tears in their eyes.

Most households have a troop of children in them, as many as six or eight, and even a dozen. They do not avoid having children; on the contrary they are glad to have them: those who die young become cherubs in paradise. As for the others, their parents rely wholly on an animal guarantee. A donkey-driver of Salerno possessing twelve, and for whom some one expressed sympathy, replied, 'I trust I shall have four more.' An orange costs a centime, a shirt is a dress, and three-fourths of the year one can sleep in the open air. They marry quite young. A man at twenty, even in the *bourgeois* class, takes a wife. There are a great many love-marriages: girls without a penny find husbands. People of social position marry work-girls: an Italian grisette finds no difficulty in appearing as a lady.

The lower classes are very temperate; a little bread and an onion suffices for their dinner. A certain old labourer who had made a gentleman of his son lives on a *grano* of bread per diem (four centimes). They work all day, sometimes until midnight, excepting the siesta

between noon and three o'clock. Shoemakers are seen plying their awls from morning to night in the open air. The tinsmiths, who occupy entire streets back of the port, never stop their hammering. Mr. B—— required fifty women to clean cotton; two hundred and fifty rushed in over the porter's body at the door. They do less work, however, than French workmen or northern Italians, an overseer being necessary to keep them at it.

These people are brilliant, capricious, enthusiastic, unbalanced, natural. Under ordinary conditions they are amiable and even gentle; but when in peril or aroused in times of revolution and fanatical excitement, they go to the extreme of folly and frenzy.

San Carlo, Il Trovatore.—There are six rows of boxes in this theatre; the house is magnificent; the light is not strong, not dazzling. The science of humouring the eye, and indeed all the senses, is well understood here; they do not heap the audience together as at the 'Grand Opéra,' or at the 'Italiens' in Paris. Its corridors are wide, and a vacant space extends around the parterre, allowing one to circulate about freely; the seats are elevated several feet so as to permit the passage of a current of fresh air. In other respects the house is like a provincial theatre, old-fashioned, and only tolerably clean; there is no display of dress, although Titiens is the *prima-donna*, and the prices are doubled. The scenery, except one scene, is contemptible; the ballet scenes are ridiculous; hell, for instance, with its yellow rocks, appears as if it were furnished with the Utrecht-velvet stock of an *hôtel garni.* The tenor is a spasmodic buffoon, a sort of ugly Farnese Hercules, wearing one of those old chin-clasping casques which is only met with amongst classic rubbish. The basso and 'Acuzena' are of equal merit. The costumes are antiquated; they regard the middle ages as we regarded them under the empire—look at the troubadours

on the clocks in our provincial inns. Titiens alone is becomingly dressed. All sang false, and the attitude of the audience was amusing; the slightest dubious note called forth a torrent of whistles, cat-calls, and cock-crowing, and a moment after, if the rest of the air proved satisfactory, there followed the most deafening applause. Some of the men in the parquette hummed the airs aloud, and even the orchestra score, and very accurately. The people outside the door could also do this. The female wandering minstrels of the street have shrill voices, but they sing true. The Neapolitans are genuine musicians comprehending all the shades, successes, and faults of music, as we in Paris comprehend the subtleties of wit and humour.

The principal *danseuse* is 'Signora' Legrain, a French lady; while the ballet is much worse than in Paris, consisting of the same contortions, the same agility, and the same spider-like capering. All that sustains the ballet with us is here wanting, there being neither taste, elegance, nor freshness; we, at least, have scenery equal to pictures, costumes that delight a poetic eye, and armour that would fix the attention of an antiquary. Certainly, our centralisation, which is so detrimental to us, provides us with all superior things like opera, literature, conversation, and the *cuisine*.

San Carlino.—This evening the 'Menechmes' is performed, arranged *à la Napolitaine.* French pieces, translated, abound throughout Italy, but in this case the reproduction is pure invention; its characters, manners, dialogue, and language are peculiar to Naples, and are of a popular order.

This theatre is emphatically so; it is a sort of cave packed with grisettes, mechanics, and shopkeepers in old velvet vests and caps; the heat is intense, the odour intolerable, and the fleas are constantly crawling upon

one's legs. But the actors play well; they are easy, and show great familiarity with the boards, which is not surprising, considering that the same piece is played twice a day, once in the morning, and again in the evening.

Some of the scenes are admirably given, for instance, that of a lover discarded by his mistress: here is no display of *amour-propre*, but a genuine, despairing outburst of mingled indignation and passionate entreaty. A Frenchman in a similar position would show pique. Almost all are admirable mimics, especially the innkeeper and his wife. Their features play incessantly; twenty expressions go and come in a minute, and each so true and complete, that, with a little plaster, you might take a model of it.

Its wit is gross—decidedly Rabelaisian. A father states that his wife has brought him twins: 'Very good news,' replied *Polichinelle*; 'your neighbour's sow has just littered seven.' Drollery and fantastic passages abound in this comedy; others that I have read remind one of the imaginative extravagance of the grand buffooneries of Aristophanes. Polichinelle is a scamp—a flatterer, a gourmand, lachrymose, vicious, and witty; he is a droll fellow, not bad at heart, but living on his neighbours, and amusing himself in turning his talents to good account. A philosophic moralist I met here states that this character is a typical portrait of the Neapolitan such as the Bourbons made him; he is a spoiled Greek,* singularly intelligent, adroit, and malicious, but always on the side of evil, demoralised by a government that robbed him, by judges that allowed parties to suborn witnesses, by open corruption in high places, and by the conviction, constantly enforced, that honesty is not the best policy, but, on the contrary, is prejudicial. If the people now become honest

* Græculus.

it will be through interest rather than through a quickened conscience. That which still masters them is obsequiousness, suppleness, the art of avoiding and diverting obstacles, an aversion to the use of force, a talent for talking and jesting, and a disposition to be parasite, pander, and servant. By the side of these, as formerly with the Greeks, the Italians of the North are blockheads. When the Piedmontese arrived and sought to regulate administrative matters, they were very eager and smiling, and duped them without difficulty. Again, like the Greeks, they show remarkable aptitude for philosophy, which is apparent even in the common schools among the young peasants. In short, like the Greeks, they divine everything, and instruct themselves without masters. My guide at Pompeii acquired English and French in two years without assistance from anyone, through conversations with travellers, asking and writing down in an old grey paper copy-book the words he was not familiar with. 'I tell you our weak points,' added my moralising friend, 'but the foundation is good. There is a rich intelligence—only a little too rich; with us the intellect overtops all other traits. In order to develop them tell me which government is best, that of a despot which imprisons the wise, or that of a *bourgeoisie* which founds schools?'

CHAPTER VII.

CAPUA—LANDSCAPE—MONTE CASINO.

From NAPLES *to* SAN GERMANO: *March* 2, 1864.—As far as Capua the country is a garden. Green crops as fresh as in May cover the plain. Every fifteen feet a branchless elm sustains a tortuous vine, the lateral shoots of which extend to another trunk, and convert the field into one vast arbour. Above this brown trellis of vines and the whitened branches of the elms, rise Italian pines with their dark spreading cupolas, as if of a foreign and superior race.

The Volturno is an ordinary yellowish stream, and Capua a less than ordinary city. But how luxuriant the country around! Vegetation rises to a man's height, and the atmosphere is so mild that we can leave the windows of the carriage continually open. You think of the ancient Samnites on seeing the rugged range of mountains rising behind the city. What could prevent the wolves of these gorges and heights from seizing their prey on the plain? Such a city was a quarry to them. You recall the passage of Livy describing that striking scene of southern earnestness and emphasis when the deputies, prostrate suppliants in the vestibule of the curia, with tears in their eyes, delivered over to the Romans their persons and property, 'the city of Capua, the inhabitants of the Campagna, their fields, the temples of their gods, and all things human and divine.' What zeal for the

State, what political solicitude on the part of the humblest artisan, what an inevitable confusion of public and private interests, when from the city walls they beheld marauding bands of shepherds approach similar to our modern brigands, and when all assembled weekly in the great temple to deliberate on the best means of avoiding pillage, murder, and slavery! Never can we comprehend the passion of the ancient for his city!

These mountains are almost bare; they are rugged and strewn with rocks, seeming to be the ruins of a convulsion, as if their sides and summits had been shattered by an earthquake, and their riven masses scattered around in fragments. Precipitous peaks rise into the air like knife-blades. There are no trees, only a few tenacious cowering bushes, and some mosses, and frequently nothing. One mountain spreads out its ragged triangle like a mass of scoria; others rise up seemingly rent asunder in a furious conflagration, erect, like mummies of ashes surrounded by their wan companions. The highest on the horizon are capped with snow. From these issued the Samnites, the adventurers of the *ver sacrum*, wearing goat-skins and cords twisted about their feet, their beards untrimmed, and with fixed black eyes, like the herdsmen now in sight. A residence in California or New Zealand is necessary, if one would appreciate at the present day the picture of an antique city.

The sky is as fine as in June, equally as warm and glowing. The mountains on either side are of a simple grave blue,* extending one behind the other like the steps of an amphitheatre purposely arranged to please the eye. A delicate haze, a glowing transparent veil envelopes their grand forms, and above them floats story upon story of snowy clouds.

During the night it rained violently, and labourers of

* Cæruleus.

every description are now engaged mending the roads washed by the torrents. For the first time I meet with some really beautiful women. They are quite ragged, and you would not touch them even with gloves on, but a few paces off they resemble statues. Being compelled to carry water, mortar, and other burdens on their heads, they display the erect attitude and dignified bearing of canephoræ. A piece of thick white linen covers the head, which, falling on the sides, protects it from the sun's rays. On this white ground the warm complexion and the black eyes produce an admirable effect. Several possess regular features; one, slightly pale, has a face as elegant as one of Da Vinci's. The chemise folds carelessly about her neck above the corsets and seems expressly arranged to be painted, while the skirt falls in natural folds, because the figure stands upright.

As evening approaches, the mountains to the eastward became more beautiful. They are not too near nor too grand, not overwhelming like the Pyrenees, or melancholy like the Cevennes. Between them extends a broad fertile Campagna; they are wholly decorative, and serve as a middle distance to the picture. They are equally perfect in nobleness and in simplicity. Tints of violet, blue, and mauve insensibly steal over them. Several have the appearance of watered-silk robes with their broken folds; their steep crags and naked promontories at this distance are only lustrous plaits. Towns and villages on the heights form spots of white, and the azure of the sky is so pure and powerful, and yet so soft, that I do not remember to have seen a more beautiful colour.

Monte Casino.—I am acquainted with one of the superiors of Monte Casino, and I stopped there on passing. You are familiar with the name of the principal and most ancient of the Benedictine Abbeys. It belongs to the sixth century, and is erected on the site of a temple of

Apollo; earthquakes have repeatedly destroyed it, the edifice now standing being of the seventeenth century. From this centre monastic life spread over barbarous Europe in the darkest period of the middle ages. Whatever remained of ancient civilisation reposed thus in remote corners, within a monastic shell, like the chrysalis in its covering. Here monks copied manuscripts to the droning hum of litanies, while northern savages traversed the valleys, gazing on the rocky summits and stony walls protecting the last of these asylums. They forced its gates many times, but later, when converted, their heads bowed in superstitious terror before its venerated relics. A king whose history is painted on one of the walls, abdicated his crown here in order to assume the garb of a monk.

The ascent to the convent begins at St. Germano. This is a miserable little town, situated on a mountain-side, its steep flinty streets being filled with ragged children and stray hogs. The house-doors stand open: a dark porch sharply intersects the crude white wall, while the furniture and household implements within, dimly discernible though the teeming shadows, flicker with passing reflections. On the right, on the top of a singular mass of blackened stones, the dislocated mountain bears the remnant of a feudal castle. On the left, a zigzag road winds for an hour and a half up to the summit. Bushes of mastic and tufts of grass glimmer in the crevices of the rocks, and lizards dart about amongst the stones at every tep. Higher up appear oaks, box, broom, and *euphorbia*, whatever of winter vegetation that is able to subsist amongst crumbling crags and on stony sterile breasts.

Looking off into space you see an army of mountains, nothing but mountains, the sole inhabitants, and range after range absorbing the entire landscape. One of them, with its jagged brow jutting forth like a promontory, seems

to be a gigantic saurian stretching his long skeleton before the entrance of a valley. Such a spectacle leaves St. Peter's, the Colosseum, and all other human monuments far in the background. Each has its own physiognomy, like an animated countenance, but indescribable, because no living form corresponds to a mineral form; each has its own colour, one being grey and calcined, like a cathedral devastated by fire, another brown, and furrowed with the white lines of torrents, the more distant of a serene blue, and the most remote merged into glowing luminous atmosphere and magnificently varied with shadows and masses of cloud. Diverse as they are, whether bold or retiring, majestic or mournful, they are ennobled by the soft luminous atmosphere and by the grand celestial canopy overhead, of which their vastness renders them worthy. No caryatides are equal to these colossi.

On the summit, on an esplanade, stands the great square convent with its stories of terraces and rocky gardens surrounded by bald peaks, constituting a choir of which it forms the centre. At the end of a long ascending porch you perceive a court enclosed within rows of columns. From this court broad steps lead to a still higher court, also furnished with its porticoes; here, displayed upon the walls, is a silent assembly of statues of abbés, princes, and benefactors. The church rises in the background. From its portal the eye ranges over columns and arches sharply defined on the clear azure, and beyond, in the luminous coruscations of sunset, over the ample architecture of the mountains. Stone and sky is all—it almost prompts one to turn monk.

My apartment is situated at the end of one of those enormous corridors in which you so easily get lost. Its two windows open each on a distinct mountain horizon. It is almost without furniture: in the middle of the floor

stands a *brasero* with coals smouldering beneath white ashes, and serving as a fireplace. On the wall hang several engravings of the works of Luca Signorelli, representing superb naked figures posed like wrestlers, in the style of Michael Angelo. An adjoining chamber contains a number of black old pictures, suspended on the colonnade, of which Tobit and the Angel forms the subject. The most insignificant object here bears the stamp of former grandeur.

Roman *savants* often resort here to pass three or four months in the heat of summer, and to work comfortably in a silent and temperate atmosphere. The library contains forty thousand volumes, and a quantity of diplomas. Its hospitality is complete; there is no charity-box—you can scarcely give anything to a servant. The order has preserved ancient traditions, its love of knowledge, and its liberal spirit. The monks are not confined to their cloisters and divorced from all society, but are at liberty to leave them and travel. One of them, Father Tosti, is a historian, a thinker, a considerate reformer, but imbued with the modern spirit, and persuaded that henceforth the Church must be conciliated with science. They study and teach as formerly. Out of three hundred occupants of the monastery twenty are monks, and about one hundred and fifty are pupils, all pursuing their studies, from the rudiments up to theology. In the evening we could hear beneath us in a ravine filled with broom and lentisk, the children of the seminary shouting and running about, their black robes and broad-brimmed hats being now and then visible amidst the green of the trees.

We dined by ourselves in the immense refectory, lighted by a brass lamp without a glass, similar to those found at Pompeii. Its feeble taper cast flickering gleams on the pavement and on the great stone vault above, the réflections being drowned in the vague overwhelming obscurity.

An enormous fresco on the right, the 'Multiplication of the Loaves and Fishes,' by Bassan, an entire surface of the wall covered with crowds of figures, hovered there like an apparition of phantoms of old; and when the servant entered with our meal, his black solitary form advancing in the yellow penumbra, seemed likewise to be a phantom.

The morning light entering through my curtainless window awoke me. I doubt if many sights in the world equal in beauty that of such an hour in such a place. The first impression is one of astonishment at finding the mountains of the previous evening still in the same position. They appear more sombre than they did yesterday; the sun has not yet touched their tops and they remain cold and grave; but in the grand arena below, expanding from the base of the convent, and in the neighbouring valleys, myriads of clouds ascend and tranquilly diffuse themselves, many as white as swans, and others transparent and melting, some clinging to the rocks like gauze, and others suspended and floating like mist above a watercourse. The sun rises, and his oblique rays suddenly people these depths. Illuminated clouds form groups of aerial spirits, delicate, and of exquisite grace, the most remote glowing and diaphanous like a bridal veil: all this dazzling brightness, these moving splendours, forming an angelic choir within the dark walls of the amphitheatres: the plain has disappeared, and only mountains and clouds are perceptible —sombre, motionless, venerable monsters, with young lithe vapoury gods flying and capriciously mingling together and appropriating to themselves alone the sun's caresses.

The church is of the seventeenth century, and is painted by Luca Giordano and the Chevalier d'Arpino. Like the Chartreuse of Naples, it is lined with precious stones and mosaics; the pavement seems to be a rich carpet, and

the walls fine paper-hangings. The ancient gravity and energy of the Renaissance had disappeared, the sentiment of the court and the *salon* already began to prevail. The architecture is thus the work of a sensual paganism, showing the dilettanteism of the decorator; all the resources of art, such as cupolas, arcades, spiral, corinthian, and other columns, carved figures, gildings, &c., are here accumulated. The stalls of the choir are laboured to an extraordinary degree, being covered with diminutive figures and foliage. Paintings adorn the cupola ceiling, extend through the nave, overflow into the chapel, take possession of every corner, and display themselves in enormous compositions over the portal and arches. Colour is as flattering to the eye as a ball-dress. A charming 'Truth,' by Luca Giordano, has scarcely any drapery but her blonde hair, and another figure, 'Benevolence,' is, they say, a portrait of his wife. The other Virtues, so graceful, are the gay amorous ladies of an age buried in ignorance and resigned to despotism, one no longer concerned with aught but sonnets and gallantry. The painter rumples and tosses about his silks and stuffs, hangs pearls in dainty ears, puts glittering gold necklaces on fresh satiny shoulders, and so pursues the brilliant and agreeable that his fresco at the entrance, 'The Consecration of the Church,' resembles a sumptuous and tumultuous scene at the opera.

The altar, supported by two gigantic cherubs, is said to be by Michael Angelo. A massive gold crucifix is by Cellini. The organ has the most complicated and most brilliant of registers; two of the monks are Germans, and they are studying in the archives the buried treasures of ancient music. You have everything here, not only the arts and the sciences, but the grand spectacles of nature. This is what the old feudal and religious society provided for its pensive, solitary spirits; for minds which, repelled

by the bitterness of life, reverted to speculation and self-culture. The race still subsists; only they no longer possess an asylum; they live in Paris and in Berlin in garrets. I know of many that are dead, of others saddened and chilled; others, again, worn out and disgusted. Will science ever do for its faithful servants what religion has done for hers? Will there ever be a laic Monte Casino?

BOOK III.

ROME.

CHAPTER I.

THE GENERAL ASPECT OF ROME—MASS AT THE SISTINE CHAPEL—THE STREETS OF ROME.

Rome: March 10.—You ask me if one can amuse himself in Rome. Amuse, as a French term, has meaning only at Paris. Here, if you are not of the country, you must study—there is no other resource. I pass three or four hours a day before pictures and statues. I write my impressions on the spot, and only write when I have an impression. You must not, accordingly, look for full descriptions, nor a catalogue; rather buy Murray, Forster, or Valery—they furnish all the information you require on art and archæology. They are certainly very dry, but the fault is not theirs—are colour and forms to be made appreciable by lines of words on paper? The best thing is engravings, especially old engravings like the works of Piranési. Open your portfolios and look at the great squares surrounded by domes and lofty edifices, dusty and crossed with ruts, with Louis XIV. carriages loaded with lacqueys passing, whilst vagabonds approach begging, or lie sleeping against a column. These tell more than all the descriptions in the world. It is necessary, however, to abate something; the artist has chosen a

favourable time, an interesting effect of light, for no other reason than that he was an artist; besides an engraving has not the disadvantage of a bad odour, and the mendicants you see in them inspire neither compassion nor disgust. You envy my sojourn at Rome. I am glad I came, because I am learning many things here, but for true pleasure, unqualified poetic enjoyment, I found it more readily when I sat with you, at eleven o'clock in the evening, turning over the contents of your old portfolios.

As to life here, it is not at all interesting. I rent a small lodging of an agreeable well-to-do family, and completely Roman, who reserve what is cleanly for their tenants, and the opposite for themselves. One of the sons is a lawyer, and another an *employé*. The family live by letting the front rooms of their house, confining themselves to the apartments in the rear. The stairs are never swept, and, there being no *concierge*, the entrance remains open day and night, come who will. To offset this the door of each apartment is massive and capable of resisting any attack. There is no light: lodgers are obliged, in the evening, to carry matches with them in their pockets; these are indispensable except when there is moonlight. One of our friends placed a lamp on his landing-place at his own expense; in the evening the lamp was stolen; a second and a third met with the same fate, and he has returned to matches. In the morning we breakfast at the café Greco; this is a long, low, smoky apartment, not brilliant or attractive, but convenient; it appears to be like the rest throughout Italy. This one, which is the best in Rome, would pass for a third-rate café in Paris. It is true that almost everything here is good and cheap; the coffee, which is excellent, costs three sous a cup. This done I go to a museum or gallery, and almost always alone; otherwise it would be impossible to have any impressions of my

own, and especially to adhere to them: conversation and discussion act on inward reverie and imagery like a broomstick on a cluster of butterflies. In wandering about the streets I enter the churches, and my guide-book informs me of their architects and century; this gives them an historical position, and involuntarily I fall into a train of reflection on the social condition out of which they sprung. Returning home, I find on my table books of the epoch, and especially memoirs and poems; I read these an hour or two, and then finish my notes. Rome I regard as only a grand old curiosity shop: what can one do here but study art, history, and archæology? If I did not thus occupy myself I am satisfied that the confusion and dirt of its *bric-à-brac,* the cobwebs, the mustiness of so many precious objects, formerly bright and perfect, but now faded, mutilated, and despoiled, would give me a fit of the blues. When evening comes I take a cab and pay some visits. Being well provided with letters of introduction, I encounter persons of all conditions and all shades of opinion, and I have met with a great deal of kindness and civility. My landlord talks to me about the present time, about religion, about politics. I strive to gather a few ideas concerning the Italy of to-day, which is the complement of the Italy of the past, and the last of a series of medals, all commenting on and explaining each other; with these I pursue my usual course. After having tried many experiments, I find only one good thing left, or at least one supportable thing, which is to attend to my business.

Arrival at Rome.—The Rome of last evening, so dark and shopless, with its few dim gaslights scattered wide apart, what a funereal spectacle! The Piazza Barberini, where I lodge, is like a catafalque of stone with a few forgotten tapers burning on it; the feeble little lights seem to be swallowed up in a lugubrious shroud of shadow, and

the indistinct murmur of the fountain in the silence is like the rustling of phantoms. The nocturnal aspect of Rome cannot be described; in the daytime '*cela le mort*,' * but at night there is all the horror and the grandeur of the sepulchre.

Sunday and Mass at the Sistine Chapel.—We take our place in line at the entrance, the ladies without bonnets, in black veils, and the gentlemen in dress-coats, which is the prescribed uniform; but you wear your oldest coat—some of the men wear brown pantaloons, and grey broad-brimmed hats: the assembly seems to be composed of usher's officials and funeral undertakers. People come here out of curiosity as they go to the theatre; the ecclesiastics themselves converse freely and with animation on indifferent matters.

A conversation on rosaries takes place near me. 'At Paris they cost thirty-six francs a dozen; the best here, the cheapest, can be had behind the church of Santa Maria sopra Minerva.' 'I will recollect that name: how do you get to it?'—'Do you know that we shall not have the Pope to-day? he is unwell.'—'Me? I lodge in the Via del Babuino, at five francs a day, including breakfast; the wine, however, is weak.'—'Look at those queer Swiss, coloured and striped like opera *figurants!*'—'He who has just come in is Cardinal Panebianco, a grey old monk; the next vacancy he will be *papabile*.'—'I don't like lamb, and genuine *gigot* cannot be had.' 'You will hear the soprano Mustapha, an admirable fellow!' 'Is he really a Turk?' 'He is neither Turk nor man.'—'Monsignor Landriani, a fine head but a donkey of the first water!'—'The Swiss guard is of the sixteenth century. Look at their frills and white plumes and their halberds, and the red, yellow, and black stripes

* An expression of M. de Girardin, signifying that the city appears corpse-like.

of their doublets! They say this costume was designed by Michael Angelo.' 'Michael Angelo then did all this?' 'The best of it.' 'He ought then to have improved the *gigot*.' 'You will become accustomed to that.' 'No more than I will to the wine. But my legs are sinking from under me.'

The mass is an imposing ceremony: damask copes glitter at every movement; the bishop and his acolytes, tall in stature and nobly draped, go through their manœuvres in the gravest and choicest of attitudes. Meanwhile the cardinals one by one advance, wearing their red hats; two attendants bear their scarlet trains; they take their seats, each with his train-bearers at his feet. Many of these heads are furrowed, and profoundly expressive, especially amongst the monks; but none are more so than that of the officiating prelate, who, dark, meagre, hollow-eyed, and with a magnificent full brow bearing a mitre, sits, in his sparkling stole, like a motionless Egyptian god. A general of the Theatines, in a brown and white cassock, delivered a sermon in Latin, with good accent and appropriate gesture, quite free of exaggeration or monotony. This scene would have furnished Sebastian Leclerc with a subject for an engraving.

The vocal music can be described only as frightful squalling. All the incredible intervals that can be conceived of seem to have been capriciously patched together. Occasionally a strain of a mournful original character is distinguished; but the harmony is brutal, and there are violent throat efforts worthy of drunken choristers. Either I have no ear for music or they sang false: the altos were nothing but screeches. A big chorister in the middle bellowed: you could see him in his cage hard at work, and perspiring freely. One piece was given after the sermon in a refined and chaste manner; but

what disagreeable voices! the altos shriek, and the bassos bark!

The breaking up of this assemblage is interesting. You see at the end of the colonnade each cardinal entering his carriage, and his three lacqueys stacking themselves up behind, a red umbrella, perched upon the box, indicating to soldiers that they must present arms. The procession of retiring figures under the arcades, the parti-coloured Swiss guard, the women in black veils, and the groups forming and dissolving on the staircases, the fountains playing and visible between the columns,—form a tableau such as is unknown at Paris; you have a composition in a frame, and with an effect. You easily recognise an old engraving.

In strolling through the streets on foot and in vehicles, you finally arrive at this impression, which floats above all others, that Rome may be filthy and gloomy, but not commonplace. Grandeur and beauty are rare anywhere, but almost every object here is worth painting, and draws you out of a petty conventional existence.

In the first place, Rome being built on hills, its streets have variety and character: according to their declivity, the sky is variously figured between the files of its buildings. Again, so many objects indicate power, even at the expense of taste; churches, convents, obelisks, colonnades, fountains, and statues, all are commemorative either of important characters and circumstances or of wealth and grandeur due to material or spiritual conquests. A monk is a strange animal, and belongs to an extinct species. A statue has no relationship to *bourgeois* necessities. A church, even Jesuitical, and whatever its pompous decoration may be, testifies to a formidable corporation. Those who created monk, statue, and church have left their visible imprint on the common roll of humanity either through their abnegation or through their energy. A

convent like the *Trinità del Monte* with the air of a closed fortress, a fountain like that of Trevi, a palace massive and monumental like those of the Corso and of the great square of Venice, denote beings and tastes not of the ordinary stamp.

On the other hand, contrasts abound. On leaving, for example, a noisy, animated street, you skirt an enormous wall for a quarter of an hour oozing with moisture and incrusted with mosses, encountering nobody, not even a cart; at long intervals an iron-knobbed gate appears under a low arch, the secret exit of some extensive garden. You turn to the left and enter a street of shops with garrets swarming with ragged *canaille*, and dogs rummaging in heaps of offal; it terminates in front of the richly sculptured portal of some over-decorated church, a sort of ecclesiastical bijou fallen upon a dunghill. Beyond this the sombre, deserted streets again resume their wonted development. Glancing suddenly through an open gateway, you see a group of laurels and rows of clipped box, and a population of statues surrounded by jets of spouting water. A cabbage market displays itself at the base of an antique column. Booths, protected by red umbrellas, stand against the façade of a ruined temple, and on emerging from a cluster of churches and hovels you perceive plots of verdure, vegetable gardens, and beyond these a broad section of the Campagna.

Finally, there quarters of the houses have an original aspect; each is interesting by itself. They are not simple piles of masonry, merely convenient lodgings and expressionless. Many of them support on their tops a second and smaller house, also a covered terrace serving as an airy promenade. The ugliest, with their rusty gratings and obscure corridors and tumbling staircases, are repulsive, but you stop to look at them.

I must again compare Rome to an artist's studio; not,

however, to that of a fashionable artist who, as with us, covets success and parades his profession; but to that of one who is old and wears long hair and whose genius of former times now displays itself in disputes with his creditors. He is bankrupt, and his creditors have more than once stripped his lodging of its furniture; but, as they could not carry away the walls, many fine objects in it have been forgotten. At the present moment he lives on his own ruins, acts as cicerone, and pockets his fees, somewhat despising the rich whose crowns he receives. He eats poor dinners, but consoles himself with souvenirs of the glorious exhibitions in which he once figured, quietly saying to himself, and even at times openly, that next year he is going to take his revenge. It must be stated that his studio has a bad odour; the floor has not been swept for six months, the sofa has been burnt by the ashes of his pipe, and his old mouldy shoes lie in a corner, and you see on the buffet fragments of sausage and bits of cheese; but this buffet is of the Renaissance epoch, and that threadbare tapestry hiding an old mattress is of the *grand siècle*, and along the wall, traversed by the rickety stove-pipe, are ranges of pieces of armour and rare inlaid arquebuses. You must visit the place, but not to remain in it.

We traversed long sloping streets, running between large walls with bulls'-eyes or gratings in them, over an interminable lonely bright pavement, and, passing the palace of Lucrezia Borgia, went as far as San Pietro in Vinculo to see the 'Moses' of Michael Angelo. The first sight of this statue is less surprising than one would suppose. We are familiar with it engraved and reduced; the imagination, as is always the case, has exaggerated it; moreover, it is polished and finished with extreme perfection. It is in a brilliantly decorated church, and is framed in by a handsome chapel. As you dwell on it,

however, the colossal mass produces its effect. You feel the imperious will, the ascendency, the tragic energy of the legislator and exterminator; his heroic muscles and virile beard indicate the primitive barbarian, the subduer of men, while the long head, and the projections of the temples, denote the ascetic. Were he to arise, what action and what a lion's voice!

What is most charming here is what you encounter on the way unexpectedly; now the Quirinal palace on the summit of a hill entirely detached in the grey atmosphere, and in front, its horses and colossi of marble; a little farther on the pale verdure of a garden, and the immense horizon with its melting clouds; again an Armenian convent with its fertilising waters flowing in stone conduits, its scattered palms, its enormous vine, which of itself forms a bower, and its beautiful orange trees, so tranquil and so noble with their burdens of golden fruit. Indian figs warm their thorny slabs on the sides of the rocks; delicate branches begin to put forth buds, and no noise is heard but the almost insensible dropping of a warm rain. How easy to dream away life here in idle self-communion! But an ever gay, or, at least, a healthy mind is imperative.

CHAPTER II.

ANTIQUE STATUES—THE CAPITOL—GREEK NUDITY AND GYMNASTIC LIFE—MORAL DIFFERENCES INDICATED AND PRODUCED BY CHANGE OF COSTUME—BUSTS—PICTURES—THE FORUM.

FORTUNATE am I to have packed a few Greek books in my trunk. None could be more useful; classical phrases constantly arise in the mind in these galleries, this or that statue bodying forth a line of Homer or the opening of one of Plato's dialogues. I assure you a Homer or a Plato are better guides than all the archæologists, artists, and catalogues in the world. At all events they interest me more, and render things clearer. When Menelaus is wounded by an arrow, Homer compares his white body, stained with red blood, to the ivory which a Carian woman dips in purple to make a blinder for a bridle. 'Many horsemen are desirous to have it, but the favour lies for a king; for two purposes—an ornament for his horse, and a glory to the driver: so, Menelaus, were thy good thighs and legs, and fair ankles beneath, stained with blood.'* This is visible, as if seen by a painter or sculptor. Homer forgets pain, danger, and dramatic effect, so sensitive is he to colour and form; on the contrary, what less concerns the ordinary reader than streaming red blood and the fine lines of a leg, and particularly at such a moment? Flaubert and Gautier, who are regarded as innovators and eccentric, give precisely similar descriptions nowadays. The ancients

* The Iliad of Homer, translated by a Graduate of the University of Oxford.

lack artists as commentators; thus far closet erudites are their sole interpreters. Those who are familiar with antique vases, see nothing in them but their design and fine proportions, their classic merit; there remains to be discovered their colouring, emotion, life, all of which is superabundant. Observe the petulance, the drollery, the incredibly fertile imagination of Aristophanes, his prolific, surprising, and ridiculous invention, his fantastic buffoonery, his incomparable freshness, and the startlingly sublime poesy intermingled with his grotesque imagery. Put together the wit and fancy of all the studios of Paris for twenty years, and there would be no approach to it. The human brain of those days was organised and furnished in a peculiar manner; sensations entered it with another shock, images with another relief, and ideas with other sequences. In certain traits the ancients resemble the present Neapolitans, in others the social French of the seventeenth century, in others the young literary aspirants of the republics of the sixteenth century, and in others, finally, the armed English now extending their empire in New Zealand; but a lifetime is necessary, and the genius of a Goethe, to enable one to reconstruct souls of that stamp. I see a part, but not the whole.

Besides special collections, there are here two grand museums of antique sculpture, those of the Capitol and of the Vatican. They are very well arranged, especially the latter: the most precious statues are placed in distinct cabinets painted in dark red, so that the eyes are not diverted from them, the statue being seen in full light. The ornamentation is modest and of antique sobriety: traditions are better preserved here than elsewhere, the popes and their architects having retained somewhat of grandeur in their taste even in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

As to the two edifices, I refer you to engravings; old

ones are best; first, because they issue from a truer sentiment, and next, because they have a dreary, or at least a grave aspect. Let a drawing be clean and fresh, especially as it approaches the elegant illustrations of the present day, and it represents Rome in an opposite sense. It must be borne in mind that a monumental structure, even when modern, is defaced and neglected; winter has cracked its stones, and the rains have covered it with dingy spots; the pavement of its courts is disjointed, and many of the slabs are broken and sunk in the ground; its antique statues display half amputated feet and bodies covered with scars; the poor old marble divinities have been scratched with the knives of idle boys or show the effects of a long sojourn on a damp soil. A biassed imagination, moreover, amplifies: two or three visits are necessary in order to arrive at just conceptions. Who, for instance, has not silently wondered on thinking of the Capitol? This mighty word agitates you beforehand, and you are disappointed on finding a moderately grand square flanked by three palaces not at all grand. Nevertheless it is imposing; a grand stone staircase leading up to it, gives it a monumental entrance. Two basalt lions guard the base of the ascent, and two colossal statues its summit. Balustrades with their solid lines cross and recross in the air, while on the left a second staircase of extraordinary width and length stretches upward to the red façade of the church of Ara-Cœli. On these steps hundreds of beggars as ragged as those of Callot, clad in tattered hats and rusty brown blankets, are warming themselves majestically in the sunshine. You embrace all this in a glance, the convent and the palace, the colossi and the *canaille*: the hill loaded with architecture suddenly rises at the end of a street, its stone masses spotted with crawling human insects. This is peculiar to Rome.

The Capitol.—In the centre of the square stands a

bronze equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius. The attitude is perfectly easy and natural; he is making a sign with his right hand, a simple action, that leaves him calm while it gives life to the entire person. He is going to address his soldiery, and certainly because he has something important to say to them. He does not parade himself; he is not a riding-master like most of our modern equestrian figures, nor a prince in state displaying his rank: the antique is always simple. He has no stirrups; this is a pernicious modern contrivance, interfering with the freedom of the limbs, and due to the same manufacturing spirit that has produced flannel-jackets and jointed clogs. His horse is of a strong stout species, still related to the horses of the Parthenon. Nowadays, after eighteen centuries of culture, the two races, man and horse, have become refined and *distingué*. On the right, in the Palazzo dei Conservatori, is a superb Cæsar in marble, wearing a cuirass, and in a no less manly, natural attitude. The ancients set no value on that half-feminine delicacy, that nervous sensibility which we call *distinction*, and on which we pride ourselves. For the *distingué* man of the present day a *salon* is necessary; he is a dilettante, and entertaining with ladies; although capable of enthusiasm he is inclined to scepticism; his politeness is exquisite; he dislikes foul hands and disagreeable odours, and shrinks from being confounded with the vulgar. Alcibiades had no apprehension of being confounded with the vulgar.

A huge dismembered colossus has left his marble feet, fingers, and head here; the fragments lie strewn about the court between the columns. But the most interesting objects are the barbarian kings in black marble, so vigorous and so melancholy-looking in their grand drapery! These are Roman captives, the vanquished of the north, as they followed the triumphal car to end their career with the axe on the Capitol. You cannot move without

encountering some new sign of antique life. Facing you in the court of the museum is the large statue of a river deity stretched out over a fountain, a powerful pagan torso, with the thick hair and ample beard of a virile god slumbering half-naked and enjoying a simple natural existence. Above this the restorer of the museum, Clement XII., has placed his own charming little bust, the student's and politician's subtle, worn, and meditative features. The first and the second Rome appear side by side.

How describe a gallery? One necessarily falls into enumeration. Let me merely designate a few statues as points of indication, in order to give a form and a support to the ideas they suggest.

The hall of the dying Gladiator.—Here is a real and not an ideal statue; the figure nevertheless is beautiful, because men of this class devoted their lives to exercising naked. Around him are ranged an admirable Antinous, a grand draped Juno, the Faun of Praxiteles, and an Amazon raising her bow. The ancients naturally represented man naked, whereas we as naturally represent him draped. Personal experience provided them with ideas of a torso, of a full chest displayed like that of Antinous, of the expanded costal muscles of a leaning side, of the easy continuity of the hips and thighs of a youthful form like that of the bending Faun. In short, they had two hundred ideas for every form and movement of the nude, whereas we are limited to the cut of a dress-coat and to facial expression. Art requires daily experience and observation; from this proceeds public taste; that is to say, the marked preference for this or that type. The type defined and understood, there are always some superior men to express it. This is why when familiar objects change art changes. The mind, like certain insects, assumes the colour of the plant on

which it feeds. Nothing is more true than that art is the epitome of life.

A Faun in red marble.—This one plainly belongs to an ulterior epoch; but the second age only continues the first. Rome, Hellenised, is another Greece. Even under the Emperors, under Marcus Aurelius, for example, gymnastic education was not sensibly modified. The two civilisations make one, both being the two stories of the same house. He holds a cluster of grapes in each hand, displaying them with an air of charming good-humour, free from all vulgar sentiment. Physical joy in antiquity is not debased, nor, as with us, consigned to mechanics, common people, and drunkards. In Aristophanes, Bacchus is it once merry-andrew, coward, knave, glutton, and fool, and yet he is a divinity; and what frenzy of joyous imagination!

Two other Fauns with well-defined muscles and bodies turned half around, also a Hercules, a magnificent wrestler in bronze-gilt. The interest of the attitude is wholly confined to the backward action of the body, which gives another position to the belly and pectoral muscles. In order to comprehend this we have only the swimming schools of the Seine, and Arpin, the terrible Savoyard. But how many have seen Arpin? And who is not disagreeably affected in our frog-ponds with its undressed bodies paddling about?

A large sarcophagus represents the story of Achilles: properly speaking, there is no dramatic interest in it, but only five or six nude young males, two females in the centre draped, and two old men in the corners. Each form being beautiful and animated, is sufficiently interesting in itself; the action is secondary, as the group is not there to represent this; it simply binds the group together. Passing a fine female figure draped, we come to a nude young man, and then to an admirable old man seated—

all the artist intended to express. To see a body leaning over, an arm upraised, and a trunk firmly planted on the two hips, is pleasure enough.

It is certain that all this is immensely removed from our customs. If we of the present day are prepared for any art it is not for statuary, nor even for the higher walks of painting, but, at most, for the painting of landscape and of common life, and to a greater extent for romance, poetry, and music.

Since I do not traffic with my thoughts, and can speak of things as I find them, I am firm in the opinion that the great change in history is the advent of pantaloons: all the barbarians of the North wear them in their statues; it marks the passage from Greek and Roman civilisation to the modern.—This is not a jest or a paradox; nothing is more difficult than to change a daily and universal habit. For a man to be draped and undraped he must be demolished and reconstructed. The distinctive trait of the Renaissance is the abandonment of the two-handed sword and full armour: the slashed doublet has succumbed, and the cap and tight hose show the passage from feudal life to court life. A French Revolution was necessary to banish breeches and small sword; the plebeian or fagged business man in boots, pantaloons, and frock-coat, now replaces the courtier with his red-heeled shoes, the embroidered fine talker of the ante-chamber.—In the same way the nude is an invention of the Greeks. It was discovered by the Lacedæmonians along with their tactics and regimen; the other Greeks adopted it towards the fourteenth Olympiad. To the exercises for which it is best adapted they owe their military supremacy. If, as Herodotus says, the brave Medes were conquered at Platæa, it was because they were embarrassed by their long robes. Each Greek standing alone thus found that he was more agile, more adroit in the use of his limbs, more robust, and better

prepared for the ancient system of combat of man to man and body to body. In this respect nudity formed one among many customs and institutions, and was an outward sign by which the nation distinguished itself.

I now enter the gallery of busts. It would be better to speak of it in sober phrases and with points of exclamation; but character is so salient it is impossible to do otherwise than note it in decisive terms. These Greeks and Romans, after all, were men: why not treat them as contemporaries?

Scipio Africanus: a broad bold head and not handsome; the temples are flat like those of carnivorous animals, but the square chin and firm energetic lips show the animal-tamer.

Pompey the Great: here, as in history, ranks in the second class.

Cato of Utica: a peevish schoolboy with big ears, rigid, drawn features and distorted cheeks, a grumbler and narrow-minded.

Corbulo: a wry-necked, wheedling dotard, troubled with the cholic.

Aristotle: a full complete head, like that of Cuvier, slightly deformed on the right cheek.

Theophrastus: a face with a worn, suffering expression. The complaint on happiness, on which Leopardi has commented, is by him.

Marcus Aurelius: his bust is one of those you encounter the oftenest; you recognise at once his full prominent eyes. It is a noble, melancholy head, that of a man mastered by his intellect, a meditative idealist.

Demosthenes: he has all the spirit and energy of the man of action; the brow is somewhat retreating, and the eye is as keen as a rapier; he is the perfect combatant, always armed.

Terence: an absent-minded dreamer, with low brow,

small skull, and a melancholy, impoverished look; a client of the Scipios, a poor dependant, a former slave, a delicate purist, and a sentimental poet, whose comedies were less esteemed than rope-dancing.

Commodus: a peculiar, shrewd, and dangerously wilful countenance, with full prominent eyes; a young beau, a dandy capable of strange freaks.

Tiberius: not a noble head; but for character and capacity well qualified to carry the affairs of an empire in his head and to govern a hundred million men.

Caracalla: a square, vulgar, violent head, restless like that of a wild beast about to spring.

Nero: a fine full skull, but with an expression of low humour. He looks like an actor or a leading singer at the opera, vain and vicious, and diseased both in imagination and in intellect. The principal feature is a long pointed chin.

Messalina: she is not handsome, and has carefully decked herself with a double row of dainty curls. There is a sickly smile on her face that pains you. Hers was the age of grand lorettes: this one exhibited all the folly, passion, sensibility, and ferocity that the species possesses. She it was who, moved one day by the eloquence of an accused person, withdrew to conceal her tears, but recommending her husband beforehand not to let him escape.

Vespasian: a powerful man, firmly relying on well-poised faculties, ready for any emergency, circumspect, and worthy to be a Renaissance pope.

Again in another room observe a bust of Trajan, imperially grand and redoubtable, in which Spanish pride and pomposity are most conspicuous. The history of Augustus should be read on this spot: these busts tell us more of the time than the indifferent chroniclers remaining to us. Each is an epitome of character, and,

thanks to the sculptor's talent, which has effaced accidents and suppressed minor details, this character is apparent at the first glance.

After the Antonines art visibly declines. Many of these statues and busts are inadvertently comic, disagreeably so, and even repulsive, as if the sculptor had copied an old woman's grimaces, the quivering features of a crafty man, and other low and unpleasant traits of a nervous, shattered machinery. Such sculpture resembles photo-sculpture; it approaches caricature in the statue of a woman with a nude torso and a surly head crowned with bulging knobs. . . . .

Whilst thus indulging in revery and in meditation over these beings of stone, the murmuring water jutting from lions' mouths makes music around me, and at every turn of the gallery I obtain glimpses of landscape, now a broad surface of dark wall overhung with glowing oranges, now a vast staircase decked with clambering vines, now a confused group of roofs, towers, and terraces, and, on the horizon, the enormous Colosseum. . . . . .

I am not disposed to see more to-day, and yet how can one possibly refrain from entering the neighbouring gallery, knowing that it contains the 'Rape of Europa,' by Paul Veronese? There is a duplicate at Venice; but this picture, as it stands before one, is ravishing. Engravings give no idea of it: one must see that blooming maid in her dark seagreen robe as she leans over to fasten her mistress's bracelet, the noble form and calm action of the young girl raising her arm towards the crown borne by cupids, the joy and delicate voluptuousness radiating from her smiling eyes, and from those beautiful rich forms and from the brilliancy and harmony of all this blended colour. Europa is seated on a magnificent silken and golden cloth, striped with black; her robe, of a pale violet hue, discloses her snowy foot beneath it; the careless

folds of the chemise frame the soft round throat; her dreamy eyes vaguely regard the cherubs sporting in the air, and the arms, neck, and ears sparkle with white pearls.

The Forum is a few paces off: I descend to it and rest myself. The sky was of perfect purity; the clear lines of the walls and of the ruined arcades, one above the other, relieved against the azure as if drawn with the finest pencil: the eye delighted in following them to and fro, and repeatedly returned to them. Form, in this limpid atmosphere, has its own beauty, independent of expression and colour, as, for instance, a circle, an oval, or a clean curve relieving on a clear background. Little by little the azure becomes almost green, an imperceptible green like that of precious stones, or that of the source of a fountain, but still more delicate. There was nothing in this long avenue that was not interesting or beautiful; triumphal arches half buried and obliquely opposed to each other, remnants of fallen columns, enormous shafts and capitals, lining both sides of the way; to the left the colossal arches of Constantine's basilica, varied with green pendent bushes; on the opposite side the ruins of Cæsar's palace, a vast mound of red bricks crowned with trees; Saint Como with a portal of debased columns, and Santa Francesca with its elegant campanile; above the horizon a row of dark, delicate cypresses, and farther on, similar to a mole in ruins, the crumbling arcades of the temple of Venus; and finally, as if to bar all progress, the gigantic Colosseum gilded with smiling sunshine.

Over all these grand objects modern life has installed itself like a mushroom on a dead oak. Fences of rough-hewn stakes, like those of a village fête, surround the pit out of which arise the disinterred columns of Jupiter Stator. Grass covers its excavated sides. Tattered vagabonds are pitching stone quoits. Old women and

dirty children are basking in the sun amidst heaps of ordure. Monks in white and brown frocks pass along, and after these files of scholars in black hats, led by an ecclesiastic in red. An iron bedstead factory, in front of the basilica, salutes the ear with its clatter. You read at the entrance of the Colosseum a prayer to the Virgin that procures a hundred days' indulgence, and in this prayer she is treated as an independent goddess. You still recognise, notwithstanding all this, some of the prominent traits of the ancient race and of former genius. Several of those old women resemble Renaissance sibyls. That peasant in leather leggings with his earth-stained mantle has an admirable face—a sloping nose, Greek chin, and speaking black eyes that flash and glow with natural genius. Under Constantine's arch I listen for half an hour to a voice apparently chanting litanies; on approaching, I find a young man on the ground reading in a recitative tone to an audience of five or six droll characters stretched out at full length beside him, the combat between Roland and Marsilia in Orlando Furioso.—I return and take my supper in the nearest *auberge*, at Lepri's; a dirty vagabond, a hairdresser with an old pomatumed wig plastering his cheeks and provided with a mandolin and a small portable piano with pedals, instals himself in a neighbouring room, and with arms and feet going, sings in a bass voice, and plays the airs of Verdi and a finale from La Sonnambula. The delicacy, elegance, and variety of his performance are admirable. This poor fellow has a soul, an artist's soul, and one forgets all about eating in listening to him.

CHAPTER III.

THE VATICAN—THE IDEAL OF MAN AMONG THE ANCIENTS—THE MELEAGER, THE APOLLO BELVEDERE, THE LAOCOÖN, AND THE MERCURY—THE BANKS OF THE TIBER.

The Vatican.—This is probably the greatest treasury of antique sculpture in the world. Here is a page of Greek which one ought to keep in mind in passing through it.

'I will question them, said Socrates, whether among the youths of the time there were any that were distinguished for wisdom or for beauty, or for both. On this, Critias, looking towards the door, where he saw some youths coming in, wrangling with one another, and a crowd of others following them, said: "As for beauty, Socrates, you may judge for yourself; for those who have just entered are the admirers of him who is reckoned the handsomest young man now going; no doubt they are now his precursors, and he himself will be here soon." "And who, and whose son is he?" said I. "You know him," said he. "But he was a child when you went away. It is Charmides, the son of our uncle Glaucon, and my cousin." "By Zeus! I knew him," said I; "even then he was not ill-favoured as a boy; but he must be now quite a young man." "You will soon know," said he, "how big he is, and how well-favoured." And as he spoke, Charmides entered.

'He did seem to me wonderfully tall and beautiful, and all his companions appeared to be in love with him; such an impression and commotion did he make when he

came into the room: and other admirers came in his suite. And that we men looked at him with pleasure was natural enough. But I remarked that the boys, even the smallest, never took their eyes off him; but all looked at him like persons admiring a statue.'

'So Chærephon, addressing me in particular, said: "Well, Socrates, what do you think of the youth? Is he not good-looking?" "He is," said I, "perfectly admirable." "And yet," said he, "if you were to see him undressed for his exercises, you would say that his face was the worst part about him, he is so handsome every way." And they all said the same as Chærephon.

'"Charmides," I said, "it is natural that you should surpass the others, for no one here, I think, can point out in Athens two other families whose alliance could produce any one handsomer or better than those from which you sprung. Indeed your paternal house, that of Critias, the son of Dropide, is celebrated by Anacreon, Solon, and many other poets as excelling in beauty, in virtue, and in all other things on which happiness depends. And likewise that of your mother; for no one appears more beautiful nor more great than your uncle Pyrilampe, every time that he is sent as ambassador to the great king, or to any other monarch on the continent. The latter house is in no way surpassed by the former. Born of such parents, it is reasonable that you should be first of all."' *

With this scene in your mind, you may wander through these grand halls and see these statues act and think, the Discobolus, for instance, and the young Athlete, a copy, it is said, after Lysippus. The latter has just finished a race, and holds in his hand a number by which you know that he came in fifth; he is rubbing himself with the strigil. His head is small, his intellect being ample for

* The Platonic Dialogues, by Wm. Whewell, D.D.

the corporeal exercise which is just terminated; such glory and such occupation suffice for him. In fact in the best days of Greece gymnastic triumphs were deemed so important, that many of the young devoted years to a preparation for them, under masters, and a special regimen similar to that of our race-horses under their trainers. He appears to be fatigued, and is scraping off the dust and perspiration adhering to his skin; if I may be allowed the expression, he is *currying* himself. This term is repugnant to French ears, but it was not so to the Greeks, who did not as we do—separate human life from animal life. Homer, enumerating the warriors before Troy, places men and horses indifferently on the same level: 'These,' says he, 'are the chiefs and the kings of Greece. Tell me, O Muse, which of these was best, both of warriors and of horses?'

But, on the other hand, consider what flesh such a life produced, what firmness of tissue, what a tone oil, dust, sunshine, perspiration, and the strigil must have given to the muscles! In the Rivals of Plato, the youth devoted to gymnastics jeers his adversary devoted to literature: 'It is only excercise which strengthens the body! See Socrates, that poor fellow; he neither sleeps nor eats; he is lean, long-necked, and ill on account of study! And here they all laughed.'

The body of this figure is perfectly beautiful, almost real, for he is neither god nor hero. For this reason the little toe of the foot is imperfect, the arm above the elbow meagre, and the fall of the loins strongly marked; but the legs, and especially the right one, as viewed behind possess the spring and elasticity of those of a greyhound. Before such a statue one fully realises the difference between antique civilisation and our own. An entire city selected the best young men of the best families for wrestling and running; these performances were witnessed

by everybody, both by men and women; they compared together backs, legs, and breasts, every muscle brought into play in the thousand diversities of muscular effort. A common looker-on was a connoisseur, as nowadays anybody that can ride criticises horses at the 'Derby,' or in the ring. On his return to the city the victor received a public welcome; sometimes he was chosen general; his name was placed on the public records, and his statue ranked with those of protecting heroes; the victor in the races gave his name to the Olympiad. When the 'Ten Thousand, arrived in sight of the Black Sea, and found themselves safe, their first impulse was to celebrate games; having escaped from the barbarians their former Greek life was now to recommence. 'This hill is an excellent place,' said Dracontios, 'where he who wills may run where he pleases.' 'But how can you run on such rough and bushy ground?' 'So much the worse for him who falls!' In the race of the grand stadium, more than sixty Cretans presented themselves; the others contended in wrestling, boxing, and the pancratium. It was a fine sight, for many athletes were there, and, as their companions regarded them, they made great efforts.'

A century later, in the time of Aristotle, Menander, and Demosthenes, when intellectual culture was complete, and when philosophy and comedy perfected themselves and began to decline, Alexander, disembarking on the Troad, stripped himself, along with his companions, to honour the tomb of Achilles with races. Imagine Napoleon acting in a similar manner on his first campaign in Italy. The corresponding action with him I suppose would be buttoning up his uniform and gravely assisting at a *Te Deum* in Milan Cathedral.

One sees the perfection of this system of corporeal education in the young athlete who is pitching the *discus*, in the curve of the body bending over, in the disposition

of the limbs extended or contracted so as to concentrate the greatest possible force at one point. Plato has a significant paragraph on this subject. He divides education into two equally important branches, gymnastics and music. By gymnastics he means whatever relates to the formation and exercise of the naked figure; by music whatever relates to the voice, that is to say, not only melody but the words and ideas of hymns and poems that impart a knowledge of the religion, justice, and history of heroes. What an insight this gives us into the life of the youth of antiquity! What a contrast when placed alongside of our *smattering* systems!

A grand reclining statue called 'The Nile,' a copy of which is in the Tuileries. Nothing could be more graceful, more fluid than these infantile diminutive creatures playing around this large body; nothing could better express the fulness, the repose, the indefinable, the almost divine life of a river. A divine body—these terms, coupled together in a modern language, seem to be incompatible, and yet they express the mother idea of antique civilisation.—Behind this figure stand some admirable nude athletes, quite young and holding phials of oil; one of them, apparently about thirteen years of age is the Lysis or Menexenes of Plato.

From time to time inscriptions are disinterred, throwing considerable light on these usages and sentiments so remote from ours. The following, published this year, is an inscription in honour of a young athlete of Thera; it was found on the pedestal of his effigy, and its four verses possess all the beauty, simplicity, and force of a statue. 'Victory to the pugilist is at the price of blood; but this youth, the breath still warm from the rude combat of the boxer, firmly withstood the severe labour of the pancratium, and the same sun saw Dorocleides twice crowned.'

Evil, however, must be considered as well as the good. Love as induced by gymnastic life is a perversion of human nature; in this connection the narrations of Plato are extravagant. Again, these antique customs which respect the animal in man, likewise react and develop the animal in man, and in this relation Aristophanes is scandalous. We fancy ourselves corrupt because we have licentious romances, but what would we say if one of our theatres should give us his Lysistrate? Sculpture, fortunately, shows us nothing of this singular society but its beauty. A standing canephora at the entrance of the Braccio-Nuovo is similar to those of the Parthenon, although of an inferior workmanship. When, like this figure, a daughter of one of the first families wore only one garment, and over this a short mantle, and was accustomed to carrying vases on her head, and, consequently obliged to stand erect; when her toilet consisted only of binding up her hair or letting it fall in ringlets, and her face was not wrinkled with innumerable petty graces and petty anxieties, then could a woman assume the tranquil attitude of this statue. To-day a relic of this is visible amongst the peasants of the environs who carry baskets on their heads, but they are disfigured by labour and rags.—The bosom appears under the tunic, which adheres closely to the figure, and is evidently a simple linen mantle; you see the form of the leg which breaks the stuff into folds at the knee, and the feet are naked in their sandals. No words can describe the natural seriousness of the countenance. Certainly, if one could behold the real person with her white arms and her black hair in pure sunlight, his knees would bend as if before a goddess with reverence and delight.

Look at a statue entirely veiled, for instance, that of 'Modesty;' it is evident that the antique costume effected no change in the form of the body, that the

adhesive or loose folds of drapery received their forms and changes from it; that one easily detects through the folds the equilibrium of the entire frame, the rotundity of the shoulders or of the thigh, and the hollow of the back. The idea of man was not then, as with us, that of a pure or impure spirit, *plus* an overcoat or a crinoline, but a being with a back, a breast, muscular joints, a spinal column, visible vertebra, and a neck with tendons and a firm leg from the heel to the loins. It has been stated that Homer was versed in anatomy because he so accurately describes wounds, the clavicle and the iliac bone; what he knew of man was simply what he knew of his belly and thorax, the same as all other men of that time. My own slight medical studies have considerably enlightened me in these matters; it is impossible to understand the conceptions of these artists, if one has not himself felt the articulations of the neck and limbs; if one has not acquired beforehand some idea of the two master portions of the body, the movable bust on its basin, and likewise the mechanism of the muscular system extending from the sole of the foot up the thigh to the hollow of the lumbar region, which enables a man to stand and keep himself erect.

None of this is possible without the antique costume. Observe 'Diana regarding Endymion;' her robe falls to her feet; she has besides this the usual over-garment, but the foot is naked. Put a shoe on it like that worn by the young ladies promenading the gallery here with their guide-books in their hands, and there is no longer a natural body but an artificial machine. It is not a human being but a jointed cuirass, very good for climatic rigour and pleasingly adorned to grace a parlour. Woman, through culture and the modern system of dressing, has become a sort of laced-up scarabee, stiff in her grey corslet, mounted on hard polished claws and loaded with various brilliant

appendages, all her envelopes, ribbons, caps, and crinolines agitated and fluttering like antennæ and the double set of wings. Very often this figure assumes the expression of an insect; the entire body hums with the restless activity of the bee, its beauty mainly consisting of nervous vivacity, and especially when coquettishly arranging its lustrous attire and the complicated apparatus of jewellery that gleams and flashes around it.

Here, on the contrary, the nude foot shows that the long tunic is simply a veil of no great importance; the belt is only a cord fastened beneath the breasts and is tied in a careless manner, the two breasts expanding the material; the tunic clasped over the shoulder is not broader than the width of two fingers, so that you feel the shoulder extending into the arm, which is full and strong, and not at all resembling those filamentous appendages that hang nowadays by the sides of a corset. As soon as the corset is worn there is no longer a natural form; this dress, on the contrary, can be slipped on or off in a second; it is simply a linen mantle taken up for a covering.

All this shows itself in the Braccio-Nuovo and in countless statues besides, such as the Augustus and the Tiberius. Alongside of each prominent figure is an emperor's bust. One cannot mention all; I have only to remark a Julia, daughter of Titus. The form here is fine, but the head bears the ridiculous modern knobs. Such a head-dress destroys the effect of sculpture, and the entire sentiment of the antique.

From this room you follow a long corridor crowded with Greek and Roman remains, and then enter the Musée Pio Clementino, where the works of art are separated and grouped each around some important piece in apartments of average size. I will not dwell on merely curious objects, such as the tomb of the Scipios, so prized by antiquarians and so simple in form, the stone out of which it

is fashioned resembling baked ashes. The men herein interred belong to that generation of great Romans who in conquering Samnium and organising colonies established the power of Rome over Italy, and consequently over the whole world. They were its true founders; the vanquishers of Carthage and Macedonia, and the rest that followed them, only continued their work. This block of peperine is one of the corner stones of the edifice in which we now live, and its inscription seems to address us in the grave tones of the dead, couched there for one-and-twenty centuries.

> Cornelius Lucius Scipio the Bearded,
> Born of his father Gnævus, a man wise and brave,
> Whose beauty was equal to his virtue.
> He was censor, consul, ædile in your city,
> Took Taurasia, Cisauna in Samnium,
> Subjected all Lucania, and bore off hostages.

Here are the masterpieces; and first the 'Torso,' so lauded by Michael Angelo. Indeed, in its life, in its grandeur of style, in the vigorous setting of the thighs, in its spirited action, and in the mingling of human passion with ideal nobleness, it is in conformity with his manner.—A little farther on is the 'Meleager,' of which there is a copy in the Tuileries. This is simply a body, but one of the finest I ever saw. The head, almost square, modelled in solid sections like that of Napoleon, has only a mediocre brow, and the expression seems to be that of an obstinate man; at all events nothing about it indicates the great capacity and flexibility of intellect which we never fail to bestow on our statues, and which at once suggests to the spectator the idea of offering pantaloons and overcoat to a poor great man so lightly dressed. The beauty of this figure consists in a powerful neck and a torso admirably continued by the thigh; he is a hunter and a warrior, and nothing more; the muscles of the ankle denote

this as well as the head. These people invented the horse-breeding system for man, and hence their rank in history. The Spartans of ancient Greece, who set the example to other cities, loaned each other their wives in order to obtain an *élite* stock. Plato, accordingly, who is their admirer, advises magistrates to arrange annual marriages, so that the finest men may be united to the finest women.

Xenophon for his part blames Athens, which has no system like this, and praises the education of Spartan women, so entirely planned with a view to maternity at a suitable age, and to the securing of beautiful offspring. 'Their young girls,' he says, 'exercise in running and in wrestling, and this is wisely ordered, for how can females brought up, as is usually the custom, to make fabrics of wool and to remain tranquil give birth to anything great?' He remarks that in their marriages all is regulated with this intention; an old man may not possess a young wife for himself: he must select 'among the young men whose form and spirit he most admires, one whom he will take into his house and who will give him children.' We see that this people, who in their national institutions pushed the gymnastic and military spirit the farthest, were interested above all things in fashioning a fine race.

A small rotunda alongside contains the masterpieces of Canova, so much praised, I know not why, by Stendhal. There is a Perseus, an elegant effeminate figure, and two wrestlers, who are merely rancorous pugilists, or naked cartmen engaged in commonplace fisticuffing. Nothing here intervenes between insipidity and coarseness, between the parlour dandy and the stout porter. This impotence shows at a glance the difference between the antique and the modern.

Continuing on, you come to the Belvedere 'Mercury,' a young man standing like the Meleager, but still more

beautiful. The torso is more vigorous and the head more refined. A smiling expression flickers lightly over the countenance, the grace and modesty* of a well-born youth capable of expressing himself properly because he is of an intelligent and select race, but who hesitates to speak because his soul is still fresh. The Greek *ephebos*, before whom Aristophanes pleads the cause of the just and the unjust, ran, wrestled, and swam long enough to secure that superb chest and those supple muscles; and he had still enough of primitive simplicity, and was sufficiently exempt from the curiosity disputes and subtleties, then beginning to be introduced, to possess those tranquil features. This tranquillity is so great, that at the first glance it might be taken for a moody and somewhat melancholy air. Setting aside the Venus of Milo and the statues of the Parthenon, I know of nothing comparable to it.

The Apollo Belvedere belongs to a more recent and a less simple age. Whatever its merit may be, it has the defect of being a little too elegant; it might well please Winckelmann and the critics of the eighteenth century. His plaited locks fall behind the ear in the most charming manner, and are gathered above the brow in a kind of diadem, as if arranged by a woman; the attitude reminds one of a young lord repelling somebody that troubled him. This Apollo certainly displays *savoir-vivre*, also consciousness of his rank—I am sure he has a crowd of domestics.

Neither is the Laocöon of very ancient date; it is my belief that if these two statues have obtained more admiration than others, it is because they approach nearer to the taste of modern times. This work is a compromise between two styles and two epochs, similar to one of Euripides' tragedies. The gravity and elevation of the early style still subsists in the symmetrical form of the two sons and in the noble head of the father, who, his strength and

* Infans pudor.

courage both gone, contracts his brow, but utters no cry of pain; while the later art, sentimental, and aiming at expression, shows itself in the terrible and affecting nature of the subject, in the frightful reality of the writhing forms of the serpents, in the touching weakness of the poor boy that dies instantly, in the finish of the muscles of the back and the foot, in the painful swelling of the veins, and in the minute anatomy of suffering generally. Aristophanes would say of this group, as he said of the Hippolytus or Iphigenia of Euripides, that it makes us weep and does not fortify us; instead of changing women into men, it transforms men into women.

If the footsteps of visitors did not disturb the tranquillity of these halls, one might pass the entire day in them unconscious of the flight of time. Each divinity, each hero here, has his own oratory, surrounded by inferior statues; the four oratories constitute the corners of an octagonal court, around which runs a portico. Basins of basalt and of granite, and sarcophagi covered with figures, stand at intervals on the marble pavement; alone, one fountain flows and murmurs in this sanctuary of ideal form and motionless stones. A large balcony opens out on the city and campagna; from this you obtain a fine view of the immense expanse below, with its gardens, villas, domes, the beautiful broad tops of the Italian pine rising one above another in the limpid atmosphere, rows of dark cypress relieving on bright architectural surfaces, and, on the horizon a long chain of rugged mountains and snow peaks penetrating the azure above.

I returned on foot behind the Castle of St. Angelo, on the right bank of the Tiber. A greater contrast you could not imagine. The bank consists of a long crumbling sandbank, bordered with thorny, neglected hedges; facing these, on the other side, is a range of crazy old tenements, wretched time-worn barracks, stained with infiltrations

of water and the contact of human vermin, some plunging their corroded foundations into the stream, and others with a small court between them filled with ordure and garbage. You cannot imagine the condition of walls exposed for a hundred years to the inclemencies of the weather and the abuses of their occupants. Such a bordering as this resembles the tattered skirts of a sorceress's garb, or some other ragged and infected garment. The Tiber rolls along, yellow and slimy, between a desert and a mass of corruption.

Picturesqueness, however, and something of interest is never wanting. Here and there a ruin of an old tower plunges perpendicularly into the waves; a square under a church shows its stairways sloping into the water, with boats moored to them. You are reminded of the old engravings exposed for sale on our quays, half-obliterated by rain, and torn and rumpled, but representing some grand bit of masonry or landscape just visible in a space lying between a hole and two spots of mud.

CHAPTER IV.

THE PANTHEON, AND THE BATHS OF CARACALLA.

One might remain here three or four years, and still be always learning. It is the greatest museum in the world; all centuries have contributed something to it,—what can one see of it in a month? A man with time to study, and who knew how to observe, would obtain here in a column, a tomb, a triumphal arch, an aqueduct, and especially in this palace of the Cæsars, now being disinterred, the means for recomposing imperial Rome. I visit three or four ruins, and try to trace out the meaning of these fragments.

The Pantheon of Agrippa is situated on a dirty and quaint old square, a station for miserable cabs, with their drivers ever on the look-out for strangers. The refuse of vegetable stalls is strewed about on the black pavement, and troops of peasants in long gaiters and in sheepskins stand there motionless, watching you with their brilliant black eyes. The poor temple itself has suffered all that an edifice can suffer; modern structures have been plastered against its back and sides, and it is flanked with two ridiculous steeples; it has been robbed of its bronze beams and nails in order to make the columns of the *baldichino* of St. Peter's; and for a long time rickety hovels so incrusted and surrounded its columns as to obstruct its portico, while the soil so encumbered the entrance, that one had to ascend instead of descend, in order to reach its interior. Even as it is to-day, in good

repair, its begrimed surface, its fissures and mutilations, and the half-effaced inscription of its architrave, give it a maimed and invalid appearance. In spite of all this, its entrance is grand and imposing; the eight enormous Corinthian columns of the portico, the massive pilasters, so commanding, the cross-pieces of the entablature, and the bronze doors, all declare a magnificence characteristic of a nation of conquerors and rulers. Our Pantheon compared with this seems mean; and when, after a half-hour's contemplation of it, you abstract its mouldiness and degradation, and divorce it from its modern dilapidated surroundings; when the imagination pictures to itself the white glittering edifice with its fresh marble, and the subdued lustre of its bronze tiles and beams, and the bronze bas-reliefs adorning its pediment, as it appeared in the time of Agrippa, when, after the establishment of universal peace, he dedicated it to all the gods, then do you figure to yourself with admiration the triumph of Augustus which this fête completed, a reconciled submissive universe, the splendour of a perfected empire, and you listen to the solemn melopœia of Virgil's verses celebrating the glory of this great day. 'Borne along in a triple triumph within the walls of Rome, Augustus dedicated to the gods of Italy an immortal offering of three hundred grand temples distributed throughout the city. The streets shook with the acclamations, the games, and the joy of an entire people. In the temples were choruses of women, and at all the altars; before the altars the immolated bulls strewed the ground. He himself, seated on the marble threshold of bright Phœbus, passes in review the gifts of the people, and attaches them to magnificent columns; the vanquished nations approach in long files, as diverse in arms and in mind as in language: Nomades, Africans with pendant robes, Leleges, Cares, the Gelons armed with darts, the Morins, the most remote

of men, the Dahes indomitable. The Euphrates flows placidly, and the Araxus trembles under the bridge that has overcome it.'

You enter the temple under the lofty cupola which expands in every sense like an interior firmament; the light descends magnificently from the single aperture in the top, its vivid brightness accompanied with cool shadows and a transparent veil of floating particles slowly passing before the curves of the arch. All around are the chapels of the ancient gods, each between columns, and ranged along the circular walls; the vastness of the rotunda diminishes them, and, thus united and reduced, they live subject to the hospitality and majesty of the Roman people, the sole divinity that subsists in a conquered universe. Such is the impression this architecture makes on you. It is not simple, like a Greek temple, it does not correspond to a primitive sentiment like the Greek religion; it indicates an advanced civilisation, a studied art, a scientifically cultivated intelligence. It aims at grandeur, and to excite admiration and astonishment; it forms part of a system of government, and completes a spectacle; it is the decoration of a fête, which fête is that of the Roman empire.

You pass along the Forum, and by its three triumphal arches, and the grand vaults of its ruined basilicas, and the vast Colosseum. There were three or four besides this one, the *Circus Maximus* among these, containing four hundred thousand spectators. In a naval battle, under Claudius, nineteen thousand gladiators fought in it; a silver triton issuing from a lake gave the signal with its clarion. Another contained twenty thousand persons. Musing over the ideas these give birth to, you reach the Baths of Caracalla, the most imposing object after the Colosseum that one sees in Rome.

These colossal structures are so many signs of their

times.* Imperial Rome plundered the entire Mediterranean basin, Spain, Gaul, and two-thirds of England, for the benefit of a hundred thousand idlers. She amused them in the Colosseum with massacres of beasts and of men; in the Circus Maximus with combats of athletes and with chariot races; in the theatre of Marcellus with pantomimes, plays, and the pageantry of arms and costume; she provided them with baths, to which they resorted to gossip, to contemplate statues, to listen to declaimers, to keep themselves cool in the heats of summer. All that had been then invented of the convenient, agreeable, and beautiful, all that could be collected in the world that was curious and magnificent, was for them; the Cæsars fed them and diverted them, seeking only to afford them gratification, and to obtain their acclamations. A Roman of the middle classes might well regard his emperors as so many public purveyors (*procuratores*), administering his property, relieving him from troublesome cares, furnishing him at fair rates, or for nothing, with corn, wine, and oil, giving him sumptuous meals and well-got-up fêtes, providing him with pictures, statues, pantomimists, gladiators, and lions, resuscitating his *blasé* taste every morning with some surprising novelty, and even occasionally converting themselves into actors, charioteers, singers, and gladiators for his especial delight. In order to lodge this group of amateurs in a way suitable to its regal pretensions, architecture invented original and grand forms. Vast structures always indicate some corresponding excess, some immoderate concentration and accumulation of the labour of humanity. Look at the Gothic cathedrals, the pyramids of Egypt, Paris of the present day, and the docks of London!

On reaching the end of a long line of narrow streets, white walls, and deserted gardens, the great ruin appears.

There is nothing with which to compare its form, while the line it describes on the sky is unique. No mountains, no hills, no edifices, give any idea of it. It resembles all these; it is a human structure, which time and events have so deformed and transformed, as to render a natural production. Rising upward in the air, its moss-stained embossed summit and indented crest with its wide crevices, a red, mournful, decayed mass, silently reposes in a shroud of clouds.

You enter, and it seems as if you had never seen anything in the world so grand. The Colosseum itself is no approach to it, so much do a multiplicity and irregularity of ruins add to the vastness of the vast enclosure. Before these heaps of red corroded masonry, these round vaults spanning the air like the arches of a mighty bridge before these crumbling walls, you wonder whether an entire city did not once exist there. Frequently an arch has fallen, and the monstrous mass that sustained it still stands erect, exposing remnants of staircases and fragments of arcades, like so many shapeless, deformed houses. Sometimes it is cleft in the centre, and a portion appears about to fall and roll away, like a huge rock. Sections of wall and pieces of tottering arches cling to it and dart their projections threateningly upward in the air. The courts are strewed with various fragments, and blocks of brick welded together by the action of time, like stones incrusted with the deposits of the sea. Elsewhere are arcades quite intact, piled up story upon story, the bright sky appearing behind them, and above, along the dull red brickwork, is a verdant headdress of plants, waving and rustling in the midst of the ethereal blue.

Here are mystic depths, wherein the bedewed shade prolongs itself amongst mysterious shadows. Into these the

ivy descends, and anemones, fennel, and mallows fringe their brinks. Shafts of columns lie half-buried under climbing vines and heaps of rubbish, while luxuriant clover carpets the surrounding slopes. Small green oaks, with round tops, innumerable green shrubs, and myriads of gilliflowers cling to the various projections, nestle in the hollows, and deck its crests with their yellow clusters. All these murmur in the breeze, and the birds are singing in the midst of the imposing silence,

Next you distinguish the Pinacotheca, as lofty as a church dome, and the great rotunda, devoted to vapour baths, and the enormous hemicycles, in which the spectacles were given. Imagine a club, like the Athenæum of London, a palace open to everybody ; this one being for the use of a society which, besides supplying intellectual wants, supplied those of the body; not only resorting to it to read books and the journals, to contemplate works of art, to listen to poets and philosophers, to converse and to discuss, but also to swim, to bathe, to scrub, to perspire, and even to run and wrestle, or, at all events, to enjoy the performances of those who did. In this respect Rome was simply Athens enlarged. The same kind of life, the same instincts, the same habits, the same pleasures were perpetuated; the difference between them was only one of proportion and of time. The city had expanded so as to contain masters by hundreds of thousands, and slaves by millions; but from Xenophon to Marcus Aurelius, there is no change in its gymnastic or in its rhetorical education; their taste is always that of athletes and orators, and in this sense it was imperative to cater for them; it is to naked bodies, to the *dilettanti* in style, and to amateurs of decoration and conversation, that all this appeals. We no longer have an idea of this physical pagan existence, this idle, speculative disposi-

tion: man in clothing himself and becoming Christian has transformed himself.

You ascend, I know not how many stories, and, on the summit, find the pavement of the upper chambers to consist of checkered squares of marble; owing to the shrubs and plants that have taken root amongst them, these are disjoined in places, a fresh bit of mosaic sometimes appearing intact on removing a layer of earth. Here were sixteen hundred seats of polished marble. In the Baths of Diocletian there were places for three thousand two hundred bathers. From this elevation, on casting your eyes around, you see, on the plain, lines of ancient aqueducts radiating in all directions and losing themselves in the distance, and, on the side of Albano, three other vast ruins, masses of red and black arcades, shattered and disintegrated brick by brick, and corroded by time.

You descend and take another glance. The hall of the *piscine* is a hundred and twenty paces long; that in which the bathers disrobed is eighty feet in height; the whole is covered with marble, and with such beautiful marble that mantel ornaments are now made of its fragments. In the sixteenth century the Farnese Hercules was discovered here, and the Torso and Venus Callipygis, and I know not how many other masterpieces; and in the seventeenth century hundreds of statues. No people, probably, will ever again display the same luxurious conveniences, the same diversions, and especially the same order of beauty, as that which the Romans displayed in Rome.

Here only can you comprehend this assertion—a civilisation other than our own, other and different, but in its kind as complete and as elegant. It is another animal, but equally perfect, like the mastodon, previous to the modern elephant.

In one corner, under shelter, a charming almond-tree flourished, as rosy and smiling in its blooming garb of blossoms flooded with the sun's rays, as a young girl decked for a ball,—a chance seedling, amidst these colossal walls, dropped into the corroded skeleton of this monstrous fossil.

CHAPTER V.

PAINTING—RAPHAEL, FIRST EXPERIENCES—DIFFERENCE BETWEEN EASEL AND MURAL PAINTING—TRANSFORMATION OF THE HUMAN MIND IN THE INTERVAL BETWEEN THE SIXTEENTH AND NINETEENTH CENTURIES—THE NUDE OR DRAPED FIGURE THE CENTRE OF ART IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

ROME, *March* 15.—We will now speak of your Raphael; as you like honest impressions, I will give you mine in their order and diversity.

How many times have we not discussed Raphael over his original drawings and over engravings! Here are his greatest productions. When your impressions begin to shape themselves into ideas, you make a list of the places where his pictures may be found. You pass from fresco to canvass and from gallery to church; you return to these again and again, and read his life and the lives of his contemporaries and masters. It is a labour such as you give to a Petrarch or a Sophocles; all grand objects a little remote correspond to sentiments we no longer possess.

The first aspect is singular;—you have just entered the court of the Vatican; you have seen a pile of buildings, and, overhead, a series of window-sashes giving to the edifice the appearance of a vast conservatory. With this impression in your head, you mount innumerable steps, and at the landing-place a polite, obsequious 'Swiss' pockets your two pauls with a smile of thanks. You now stand in a spacious hall encumbered with paintings. Which will you look at first? Here is the 'Battle of Constantine,'

designed by Raphael and executed by Julio Romano—in brickdust, I suppose; probably, too, it has been wet by the rain, and the colour has disappeared in places. You pass on through a long glazed portico, where the arabesques of Raphael ought to be; but you no longer find them, the faint traces of them still existing, showing that they were there once, but likewise showing that the walls have been pretty well scratched by somebody. You throw your head back, and, on the ceiling, observe the fifty-two biblical subjects called the *Loggia* of Raphael; five or six of these remain entire, while the rest appear to have been brushed away with a long-handled broom. Besides, was it worth while, in making masterpieces, to make them so small and place them so high, and reduce them to the service of the panels of a ceiling? Evidently, in the architect's mind these were simply accessories, a decorative motive for a promenade: when the Pope came here, after dinner, for fresh air, he could see at regular intervals a group or a torso, if by chance he raised his head. You return and make your first circuit of the four celebrated *stanze* of Raphael. These were the apartments of Julius II.: here the Pope transacted business, and in one of them signed his briefs. The painter here is secondary; the apartment was not made for his work, but it for the apartment. The light is dim, and half of the frescoes remain in shadow. The ceiling is overcharged, the subjects stifle each other. The colouring is faded out, and cracks cover half of the forms and heads. The faces are mottled with the pallid spots of dampness, also the drapery and architecture; the skies are no longer brilliant, but are covered with the leprous stains of mould, while the goddesses under the arch are peeling off. And yet strangers with guide-book in hand comment loudly and freely, and copyists are shifting their ladders about the floor. Imagine, in the midst of all this, the

unfortunate visitor twisting his neck off in manœuvring an opera-glass!

Nineteen out of twenty of those who visit this place must certainly be disenchanted, and exclaim, with open mouth, 'Is this all?' It is with these frescoes as with the mutilated texts of Sophocles and Homer; give a thirteenth-century manuscript to an ordinary reader, and do you suppose that he can decipher it? If he is honest, he will not comprehend your admiration of it, and will gladly exchange it for one of Dickens's romances, or a *lied* by Heine. I, too, comprehend that I do not comprehend, and that two or three visits must be made to enable me to make the necessary abstractions and restorations. Meanwhile, I am going to say what strikes me disagreeably, and that is that all these figures *pose.*

I have just been into the upper story to see the celebrated 'Transfiguration,' which is pronounced the great masterpiece of art. Is there in the world a more mystical subject than this for a picture? Heaven itself opening, beatified beings appearing, forms of flesh and blood freed from gross terrestrial conditions and ascending into glory and splendour; the delirium and sublimity of ecstacy, a veritable miracle, a vision like that of Dante when he rose into Paradise with his eyes fixed on the beaming orbs of Beatrice! The apparition of angels in Rembrandt's picture came into my mind, that rose of mysterious figures flashing out suddenly in the black night, terrifying the flocks and proclaiming to the shepherds that a Saviour was born. The Hollander in his misty atmosphere felt these evangelical terrors and these raptures; he *saw*, and he thrilled to the centre of his being with the poignant sentiment of life and of truth; things, in fine, occurred as he shows them to us; before his picture we believe because we witness the occurrence. Is Raphael a believer in his miracle? He

believes, first of all, that he must select and compose his attitudes. That handsome young woman on her knees thinks how she shall hold her arms; the three salient muscles of the left arm form an agreeable line; the fall of the loins and the tension of the entire frame from the back to the heel form precisely the *pose* that would be arranged in a studio. The figure with a book thinks how he shall show a well-drawn foot; another lifting an arm, and that next him, holding the possessed child, gesticulate like actors. And what of those apostles who allow themselves to fall into such a symmetrical group? Moses and Elias in glory, on either side of Christ, are swimmers 'striking out.' Christ himself, with his feet so nicely drawn, the large toes separated from the others, is simply a fine figure; his insteps and elbows are of more consequence to him than his divinity.

This is not impotence but system, or rather instinct, for at that time there was no such thing as system. I have before my eyes a celebrated engraving of the 'Massacre of the Innocents.' I am confident that his innocents are in no danger. The tall fellow on the left, displaying his pectoral muscles, and that in the centre who exposes the hollow of his spine, are not going to kill the little creatures they grasp. My good fellows, you are healthy and good-looking, and know how to display your muscles, but you are not up to your profession! What poor executioners you are for a king like Herod! As for the mothers, they do not love their offspring; they are tranquilly making their escape: if they make any noise they do it moderately, lest they should disturb the harmony of their attitudes; both mothers and executioners form an assembly of calm *figurants*, framed in by a bridge extending between two buildings. The same thing struck me at Hampton Court in the famous cartoons: the Apostles convicting Ananias advance to the edge of

the platform, as a chorus of opera-singers advance up to the footlights in the fifth act.

On descending, you place yourself again before the frescoes of the *stanze*, for instance, before the 'Conflagration of Borgo.' What a poor conflagration, and how little in it of the terrible! Fourteen figures kneeling on a staircase constitute a crowd; there is no danger of these people crushing each other, for their motions show that they are in no haste. In fact, the fire is not burning; how could it burn without wood to consume, stifled as it is by stone architecture? There is no conflagration here—only two rows of columns, broad steps, a palace in the background, and groups spread here and there similar to the peasants, who at this moment are lying or seated on the steps of St. Peter's. The principal figure is a well-fed young man suspended by his two arms, and who finds time to practise gymnastics. A father, on tiptoe, receives an infant, which its mother hands to him from the top of a wall,—they are about as uneasy as if they were handling a basket of vegetables. A man carries off his father on his shoulders; his naked son is by his side, and the wife follows,— antique sculpture, Æneas bearing Anchises, with Ascanias and Creusa. Two females carry vases and are shrieking,—the caryatides of a Greek temple would display the same action. I can only regard this work as a painted bas-relief, and a complement to the architecture.

Engrossed by this idea, dwelling on it, or rather allowing it to develop itself, it bears fruit. Why, indeed, should not frescoes be a complement of architecture? Is it not a mistake to consider them wholly by themselves? We must place ourselves at the same point of view as the painter in order to enter into his ideas; and certainly such was the point of view of Raphael. The 'Conflagration of Borgo' is comprehended within the space of an ornamental arc which had to be filled up. The 'Parnasus'

and 'the Deliverance of St. Peter' surmount, one a door and the other a window, and their position imposes upon them their shape. These paintings are not appended to but form a portion of the edifice, and cover it as a skin covers the body. Why, then, belonging to the edifice should they not be architectural? There is an innate logic in all these great works; it is for me to forget my modern education in order to arrive at its meaning.

At the present day we view pictures in exhibitions, and each picture exists for itself; in the artist's mind it is a complete thing and stands apart, and, as far as he is concerned, it may be hung anywhere. The painter has abstracted from nature or from history a landscape or a scene, the interest of which to him is his chief object; in this respect he acts like a novelist or a dramatist; he maintains a dialogue with us by ourselves. He is bound to be veracious and dramatic; if he shows us a battle let it be the 'Barricades' of Delacroix; if a Christ consoling the poor in heart, let it be the divine Christ of the weak and suffering by Rembrandt, with its mellow halo and mournful reflections vanishing in misty obscurity. But in decorative art the motive is quite different, and the picture changes with the motive. Here is the arc of a window with a simple, grave curve; the line is a noble one, and a border of ornamentation accompanies its beautiful sweep. The two sides, however, and the space above remain empty, and are to be filled, and they can be filled only with figures as ample and as grave as the architecture; personages abandoned to the fury of human passion would be incongruous; the license of natural groupings cannot be imitated here. It is necessary to compose and arrange the figures according to the height of the panel, some either stooping or infantile introduced at the top of the arc, and others erect or adult, along its sides. The composition is not isolated; it is the complement of

the window, and proceeds, like the entire palace, from a unique idea. A vast royal edifice is naturally grand and calm, and it imposes its grandeur and calmness on its decoration, that is to say, on its paintings.

But especially must it be kept in mind that the spectator of that day was not the spectator of our day. For the past three hundred years our brains have been employed on reasonings and on moral distinctions; we have become critics and observers of internal phenomena. Shut up in our apartments, incased in our black coats, and well protected by a police, we have neglected corporeal life and bodily exercise; we conform to the drawing-room standard, and seek pleasure in conversation and in the cultivation of our intellects; we study niceties of social intercourse and peculiarities of character; we read and comment on historians and novelists by hundreds; we have loaded ourselves down with literature. The human mind is barren of imagery and overflowing with ideas; what it comprehends, and what affects it at present in painting, is the human tragedy or the real life of which it obtains glimpses in the world of society or among rural scenes, as in the 'Larmoyeur' of Ary Scheffer, the 'Mare au Soleil' of Décamps, and 'L'Evêque de Liége,' by Delacroix. In these we find as in a poem the confessions of an impassioned soul, a sort of judgment on human life; what we seek through the medium of colour and form is sentiments. In those days they sought for nothing of the kind. The current of actual life, which interests us in inward emotion and in its outward expression, interested them in the nude figure and in the movements of the animal form. We have only to read Cellini, the correspondence of Aretino, and the historians of that era, in order to see how corporeal and perilous life was; how man took justice in his own hands, how he was assaulted on his promenades and on his journeys, how he was forced to keep his hand con-

stantly on his sword or arquebuss, and never to leave his house without a *giacco* or poignard. The great assassinated each other with impunity, and even in their palaces shared with the vulgar the coarsest of manners. Pope Julius, one day irritated at Michael Angelo, thrashed one of his prelates because he attempted to interfere. Who of the present day comprehends the action of a muscle except a surgeon or an artist? Then everybody did; not only lords but louts, the man of rank as well as the most insignificant rustic. The practice of interchanging blows with sword and fist, of jumping, of playing at tennis, and of tilting, and the necessity of being strong and agile, abundantly supplied the imagination with every variety of form and attitude. A little nude cupid viewed from the soles of his feet and darting off with his caduceus, or a vigorous youth throwing himself back upon his haunches, awoke ideas as familiar then as nowadays any intriguer or financier or woman of the world portrayed by Balzac. On seeing them the spectator imitated their action sympathetically, for it is sympathy, or involuntary semi-imitation, which renders the work of art possible; without this it is not understood, not born. The public must imagine the object without an effort; it must figure to itself instantaneously its antecedents, accompaniments, and consequences. Always when an art predominates the contemporary mind contains its essential elements; whether, as in the arts of poetry and music, these consist of ideas or of sentiments; or, as in sculpture and painting, they consist of colours or of forms. Everywhere art and intelligence encounter each other, and this is why the first expresses the second and the second produces the first. Hence if we find in the Italy of that period a revival of pagan art it is because there was a revival of pagan manners and morals. Cæsar Borgia, on capturing a certain town in the kingdom of Naples, reserved to himself forty of its most

beautiful women. Burchard, the pope's *cameriere*, describes certain fêtes somewhat like those given in the time of Cato in the theatres of Rome. With the sentiment of the nude, with the exercise of the muscles and the expansion of physical activity, the love of and worship of the human form appeared a second time.

All Italian art turns upon this idea, namely, the resuscitation of the naked figure; the rest is simply preparation, development, variety, alteration, or decline. Some, like the Venetians, display its grandeur and freedom of movement, its magnificence and voluptuousness; others, like Coreggio, its exquisite sweetness and grace; others, like the Bolognese, its dramatic interest; others, like Caravaggio, its coarse striking reality, all in short, caring for nothing beyond the truthfulness, grace, action, voluptuousness and magnificence of a fine form, naked or draped, raising an arm or a leg. If groups exist it is to complete this idea, to oppose one form to another, to balance one sensation by a similar one. When landscape comes it simply serves as a background and accessory, and is as subordinate as moral expression on the countenance or historical accuracy in the subject. The question is, do you feel interested in expanded muscles moving a shoulder and throwing back the body bow-like on the opposite thigh? It is within this limited circle that the imagination of the great artists of that day wrought, and in the centre of it you find Raphael.

This becomes still more apparent on reading their lives by Vasari. The artists of that period are mechanics and manufacturers employing apprentices. A pupil does not pass through college and fill his mind with literature and general ideas, but goes at once into a studio and works. Some character, naked or draped, is the form into which all his sentiments are cast. Raphael's education was like that of other artists. Vasari cites his youthful performances, which are nothing but Madonnas, always Madonnas.

His master Perugino, was a saint manufacturer; he might have displayed this title on a signboard. Even his own saints are plain altar saints, poorly emancipated from the consecrated *pose*: they display but little animation, and when in groups of three or four each appears as if alone. They are objects of devotion quite as much as works of art; people kneel before them and implore their favour; they are not yet exclusively painted to please the eye. Raphael is to pass years in this school, studying the position of an arm, the folds of stuffs of gold, and a tranquil meditative countenance, before he goes to Florence to contemplate forms of greater amplitude and greater freedom of action. Such a culture as this is to concentrate all his faculties on one point; all the vague aspirations, all the sublime and touching reveries which occupy the leisure hours of a man of genius, are to run in the direction of contour and action; he is to think through forms as we think through phrases.

CHAPTER VI.

RAPHAEL.

RAPHAEL led a singularly noble, happy life, and this rare order of happiness is perceptible in all his works. The ordinary trials of artists, their wasted hopes and the pangs of wounded pride, were unknown to him. He was not a victim to poverty, humiliation, or neglect. At the age of twenty-five he found himself without an effort first among the artists of his time; his uncle Bramante spared him all intrigue and all solicitation. On seeing his first fresco the Pope caused others to be effaced, and ordered that the entire decoration of his apartments should be entrusted to his hand. But one rival was opposed to him, Michael Angelo, whom so far from envying Raphael honoured with as much of admiration as respect. His letters indicate the modesty and serenity of his nature. He was exceedingly amiable and exceedingly beloved; the great protected and welcomed him, and his pupils formed around him a concourse of admirers and comrades. He had not to contend with man nor with his own heart. Love does not seem to have ruffled his spirit, this passion in him never being accompanied with either sorrow or torment. Unlike most painters he was not compelled to bring forth his conceptions in painful travail, but produced them as a fine tree produces its fruit; the vitality of the tree was great and its culture perfect; inspiration flowed naturally and the hand executed without difficulty. Finally,

the imagery in which he most delighted seemed expressly designed to maintain his spirit in repose. He had passed his early youth among the Madonnas of Perugino, pious, gentle maidens of virgin innocence and infantile grace, but healthy and untouched by the mystic fever of the middle ages. He then contemplated the noble forms and free spirit of antiquity, the placid joyousness of that extinct world the fragments of which were but just exhumed. At length from these two types he obtained an ideal of his own, and his mind wandered through a world animated with vigorous impulses, one that expanded like the antique city with joyousness and youthful energy, but over which the purity, candour, and beneficence of a new inspiration spread an unknown charm; it seemed to be a garden, the plants of which, quickened by pagan impulse, produced half-Christian flowers that bloomed with a more diffident and a sweeter smile.

I can now examine his works, and first the 'Madonna de Foligno,' in the Vatican. You are at once impressed with the meek and modest air of the Virgin, the timidity with which she touches the blue girdle of her infant, and the charming effect of the gilded border of her red robe. In all his early works, and in almost all of his Madonnas, he has preserved some souvenir of what he felt at Perugia and at Assissi, where he was surrounded by simple traditions of spiritual love and felicity. The young girls he paints are youthful communicants possessing still undeveloped souls; religion, in covering them with her wings, has retarded their growth; they are women in form but children in thought. To find similar expression nowadays we must seek for it in the innocent features of nuns immured in convents from infancy, and never brought in contact with the world. It is evident that he studied lovingly and carefully, with all the delicate sentiment of a fresh young heart, the refined curves of the nose, the fine

modelling of small mouths and ears, and the reflections of light on soft auburn tresses. An infant's blooming smile charmed him, and a thigh like that which so gently presses against that belly. Only a mother can appreciate the tender complacency with which the eye dwells on beauties like these! The painter is another Petrarch, musing over his reveries and unweariedly expressing them. Sonnet after sonnet, he makes fifty on the same face, and passes weeks in purifying verses in which he deposits his secret joy. He has no need of action or of noisy excitement; he does not aim at effect, and is insensible to the shock of surrounding circumstances. He is not a combatant like Michael Angelo, nor a voluptuary like his contemporaries, but a charming dreamer appearing just at the time when the world knew how to fashion the human form.

Nowhere is this delicacy of feeling more apparent than in the 'Descent from the Cross' in the Borghese palace. Raphael was twenty-three years of age when he executed this work, and approaching but not yet entered on the period in which he painted his frescoes. He has already got beyond the cold mannerism of Perugino, and begun to animate his figures, although with a sort of timidity and some traces of stiffness. On both sides of the corpse are groups balancing each other, three men on the left, and four females on the right, in attitudes already varied and quite beautiful. The freshness of creative power glows in this work like the dawn. Not that the picture is affecting, as Vasari insists; one must go to Delacroix for the despairing mother over a corpse, the veritable funereal bier, the deep grief of nature, the confused folds of a red mantle in tragic contrast with the lugubrious tints of a purple background. The conspicuous feature here is a rich, blooming adolescence; nothing can be finer than the noble young man who bends backward in order to support the corpse, a sort of Greek *ephebos* with the red

cnemide heightened in effect by a bordering of gold; nothing more fascinating than the young woman with braided tresses who, half-stooping, extends her arms to the afflicted mother in order to sustain her. These figures are virginal and gaily attired as if for a fête, and their eyes beam with the most winning gentleness. Delicate flowers here and there open their calyxes, and the horizon is crossed with a few slender trees. A soul as noble and graceful as that of Mozart is here budding and about to bloom.

From this you pass to his pagan works, and on seeing his sketches you enter on the field at once. I have examined them at Paris, Oxford, and London. The feeling of the painter is here caught on the wing; you get at the original inspiration, intact, as it existed in his mind before he had put it into shape for the public. His inspiration is wholly pagan; he appreciates the animal form as the ancients did; not alone pure anatomy of which he has acquired a knowledge, a lifeless form that he has fixed in his mind, a covering of drapery which he is obliged to comprehend in order to represent particular actions, but he loves nudity itself, the vigorous joints of a thigh, the superb vitality of a muscular back, all that a man possesses characteristic of the athelete and the racer. I know of nothing in the world so beautiful as his drawing of the 'Marriage of Alexander and Roxana,' a photograph of which lies before me; I prefer it to the fresco in the Borghese palace, which I have just examined. The figures are nude, and you might imagine yourself in attendance on a Greek fête, so natural is their nudity, and so remote from every idea of indecency or even voluptuousness; the simple joyousness and charming gaiety of youth, the healthiness and beauty of bodies developed in the palæstrum, are as prominent here as in the best days of antiquity. A little cupid drags a large cuirass, too heavy for his infantile limbs; two others

bear a lance; others place one of their comrades on a buckler, who is pouting as they bear him along, dancing and capering in glee and gladness. The hero advances as noble as the Apollo Belvidere, but more virile, while no words can express the animated radiant smile of his two young associates, who are pointing to the gentle Roxana, seated and awaiting his coming. Mingled grace and goodness, and an air of happiness radiate from all these heads; the bodies move and demean themselves as if revelling in simple existence. That beautiful young girl is the bride of early days; neither she nor her companions need drapery, and it is a mistake to give it to them in the fresco; they may remain as they are without immodesty; like the gods and heroes of ancient sculptors they are pure; the free expansion of a corporeal being is as natural with them as the blooming of flowers. The goddesses of this adolescent world, the immortal Hebe, and the serene gods seated on luminous heights to which neither the brutality of the seasons nor the miseries of human life can attain, may here be recognised a second time. They are also present in the 'Judgment of Paris,' as engraved by Marc-Antoine. You might pass hours in contemplating the torso of that river-god reposing amidst the reeds, those grave goddesses standing around the shepherd, those superb nymphs resting so nobly at the base of the rock, the magnificent shoulder of the leaning naiad, and the heroic cavaliers, who, aloft in the air, restrain their fiery steeds. It seems as if eighteen centuries were suddenly effaced from history, that the middle ages were simply a nightmare, and that after many years of gloomy, barren legends, mankind had suddenly awakened and discovered that but a day removed it from Sophocles and Phidias.

I visited Santa Maria della Pace, with its round, ugly, bulging façade; you enter, however, through a pretty

little cloister by Bramante, in which are two elegant arcades, serving as promenades. This church is over-decorated, like all the churches of Rome; on the left is the tomb of a cardinal of the sixteenth century—a meagre form reclining with his head resting on his hand, in all the tragic sublimity of death; sepulchres and gilding, the two extremes the best calculated to excite the imagination, are here the dominant attributes of worship. The contrast is striking on seeing the four Sibyls of Raphael under an arc in the last chapel on the left. They stand, sit, or recline, according as the curve of the arch requires, while cherubs, presenting them with parchment to write on, complete the group. Solemn, tranquil, elevated like antique goddesses above human action, they are truly superhuman creations; a calm gesture suffices—it is a complete revelation; theirs is not a diffused or transitory being, but one ever existing immutably in an eternal *present*. One need not seek for illusion here, for relief; such are the apparitions of a vision, and only discernible with closed eyes in moments of deep, silent emotion. This man has put all the nobleness of his heart, all his solitary conceptions of sublime and tranquil happiness, into these forms and attitudes, into that fraternal interweaving of beautiful arms, which, peacefully extended, seek each other, and form that garland. If we could at any time banish from our minds the sad and repulsive souvenirs of life, and could obtain a passing glance of a group of adolescent women and children like these, we should be happy and conceive of nothing beyond. One especially, standing and inclining backward, and slowly turning her head, has a proud savage eye, showing the peculiar half-divine, half-animal grandeur of primitive beings. Behind her is a wrinkled, hooded old woman, but so transfigured that she appears beautiful like the aged of the Elysian Fields of Virgil. On the other side

sits a gentle young woman in the flower of life, the full contour of her face expressing the perfection of goodness and tranquillity.

I go back at last to the Vatican, and all my impressions change. I have now placed myself at the proper standpoint. That which appeared to me cold and artificial is just what pleases me. A germ exists of which the rest is simply development, and this is a sound beautiful body, solidly and simply painted in an attitude manifesting the power and perfection of its structure. This alone we must seek for; the other elements of art are subordinate. A picture is like a rhythmical musical phrase, wherein each note is pure, and which dramatic passion never so far modifies as to introduce discords or screeching. So regarded, this or that action, which seems a studied one, is like a full and accurate chord; I have to take it by itself, abstracting both subject and resemblance, and my eye enjoys it as the ear enjoys a rich harmonious strain of music.

This crowd of figures now speak, and they only speak too loudly. There are too many of them; one can no longer describe. I will merely mention those that make the strongest impression on me.

And first is the *Loggia* of the Vatican, and in the *Loggia* the great Herculean form of the Almighty, who, in a single bound that fully displays his limbs, traverses the realm of darkness. Next the graceful form of Eve plucking the apple, her charming head, and the vigorous muscles of her youthful form as it turns on the hips,—all these figures, so powerful in their structure and so easy in action. Next the white caryatides of the Hall of Heliodorus, simple light-grey figures, veritable goddesses, sublime in their simplicity and grandeur and related to the antique, but with an air of gentleness and sweetness which Junos and Minervas do not possess; exempt from thought like their Greek sisters, and, in

their unruffled serenity, occupied in turning a head or lifting an arm. It is with these ideal and allegorical figures that Raphael triumphs;—on the ceiling Philosophy, so grave and so vigorous; Jurisprudence, an austere virgin with downcast eyes, raising a sword; and especially Poesy; and again the three goddesses seated before Parnassus, and who, half turning, form, with three children, a group worthy of ancient Olympus, all being incomparable figures, and above the standard of humanity. Like the ancients he suppresses the accidental, the fleeting expressions of human physiognomy; all those details that characterise a being tossed and tumbled about in life's battle. His personages are emancipated from the laws of nature; they have experienced no trials, and are incapable of becoming excited; their calm attitudes are the attitudes of statues. You would not dare to address them; you are restrained by respect, a respect, nevertheless, mingled with sympathy, for beneath their grave exterior you detect a basis of goodness and feminine sensibility. Raphael breathed his own spirit into them; and even sometimes, as in the muses of Parnassus, many of the young women, and among others she with the naked shoulder, have a penetrating suavity, and a sweetness almost modern. He loved these.

All this is more forcibly displayed in the 'School of Athens.' Those groups on the steps, above and around the two philosophers, never did and never could exist; and it is for this very reason that they are so fine. The scene lies in a superior world, one which mortal eyes never beheld, a creation wholly of the artist's imagination. These figures belong to the same family as the divinities on the ceiling. You must remain before them full half a day. Once realise that they are walking, and the scene strikes you as transcending all things here below. The youth in a long white robe with angelic features ascends the steps like a meditative apparition.

The other, with curled locks, bending over the geometrical diagram, and his three companions alongside are all divine. It is like a dream in the clouds. As with all the figures of an ecstatic vision or in reveries, these may remain in the same attitudes indefinitely. Time does not pass away with them. The old man erect in a red mantle, and the adjoining figure regarding him, and the youth writing might thus continue for ever. All is well with them. Their being is complete; they appear at one of those moments which Faust indicates when he exclaims, 'Stand, ye are perfect!' Their repose is eternal happiness; a certain condition of things has been accomplished and it must not be disturbed.

Human life, whether of the body or of the spirit, is of infinite and immense diversity; but there are only certain portions of it, certain moments, which like a rose among a hundred thousand others deserve to subsist, and these are those attitudes. Plenitude of force and harmony of the human structure are here displayed without incongruity or effort. This suffices; we ask for nothing more. Two adult men suspended beneath a calm adolescent in erect posture constitute a beautiful form, and it is pleasant to forget oneself before it. The expression of the heads is not antagonistic; if too pensive, too real, too brilliantly painted, they would suggest passion or emotion; in the serenity they now possess, in that sombre tint, they are in harmony with the quiet architectural significance of the postures.

Of all the artists I am familiar with none so much resemble Raphael as Spenser. On first reading him many find Spenser dull and formal; nothing with him seems real; afterwards one ascends with him into the light, and personages which could not possibly exist appear divine.

CHAPTER VII.

THE FARNESE PALACE—THE MUSEUMS OF THE VATICAN AND THE CAPITOL—THE ACADEMY OF ST. LUKE.

I TAKE a cab and traverse a number of crooked, melancholy streets. I pass over the Ponte San-Sisto and see on either side of the river a confused mass of hovels and a long range of dripping arcades; beyond is a cluster of hovels, all still preserving a middle-age aspect. In a few moments I stand in a Renaissance palace before the Pysches of Raphael.

They form the decoration of a large dining-hall wainscoted with marble, the ceiling of which is curved and framed in by a garland of flowers and fruits. Above each window the garland expands in order to make room for the vigorous forms of Jupiter, Venus, Psyche, Mercury, and the assembly of gods that cover the entire arch. On raising their eyes above the table loaded with gold plate and monstrous fishes the convivialists could contemplate beautiful naked forms relieving on the background of Olympian blue, amongst voluptuous garlands where feminine gourds and masculine radishes reminded them of the broad humour of Aristophanes. The courtesan Imperia could come here; the guests—parasites like Tamisius, and licentious artists like Julio Romano and Aretino, also prelates and nobles nourished amid the dangers and undisguised sensuality of their age—could sympathetically gaze on this gay, grand, vigorous art, on

these rudely-executed figures, whose bricklike tints are rather indications of their subjects than finished productions. Frequently a daub of white and a spot of black make an eye; the three nude Graces of the banquet are as muscular as so many wrestlers; several of the gods—Hercules, Pan, Pluto, and a river-god—are simply robust blacksmiths dashed on with broad masses of colour as if for tapestry; the cupids that transport Psyche have solid bloated flesh like overfed children. There is an exuberance of pagan vigorousness throughout this painting almost amounting to clumsiness. In Rome the type is rather one of strength than of elegance; the women, taking but little exercise, become fleshy and heavy; traces of this amplitude appear in many of Raphael's female figures—in his pulpy Graces, in the massive Eve, and in the largeness of the torso of his Venus. The paganism to which he inclined was not of the Attic standard, and his pupils who executed the paintings in this hall either half-neglected or else exaggerated his indications, like the engraver who, in reproducing a picture, is indifferent to its delicacies. In order to satisfy oneself of this it is only necessary to compare together the fresco and the original design of 'Venus receiving the Vase.' The figure as originally drawn is a virgin of primitive times, inexpressibly sweet and innocent; her childlike head, as yet unvexed with thought, placed on a Herculean trunk carries the mind back involuntarily to the origin of the human family; to those days when maidens were entitled 'milkers of the cow;' when simple athletic races, with short swords and dogs driving lions to bay, descended from their mountain fastnesses to colonise the universe.* Even through the translation of his pupils the painted figure here, as the fresco throughout, is still unique; it is a new type, not copied from the Greek, but proceeding

* According to Sanscrit tradition.

wholly from the painter's brain and his observation of the nude model; of remarkable energy and plenitude, the muscle being brought out not through a forced imitation of nature, but because it is living, and the artist sympathetically enjoyed its tension. 'Psyche borne through the air by Cupids,' and 'Venus entreating Jupiter,' are of charming freshness and youthfulness. And what can be said of the two floral messengers with their butterfly wings, and of the lovely dancing Grace in the banquet who arrives, scarcely touching her foot to the ground? All this sparkles with gaiety; life's richest flowers are gathered by handfuls. In the space alongside of the grand goddesses are flying children; a Cupid yoking a lion and a sea-horse; another diving into the soft waves, in which he is going to sport himself; then white doves, little birds, hippogriffs, a sphinx with a dragon's body, and other gay creations of an ideal imaginativeness. Among these phantasies winds the tufted garland, intermingling the splendours of spring and summer, pomegranate and oak-leaves, blooming daisies, the pale golden lime, the satiny calyxes of the white narcissus, along with the opulent rotundity of the gourd family. How remote from his former Christian timidities! Between the 'Descent from the Cross' and the Farnesian decoration, the breath of the spirit of the Renaissance passed over him and developed all his genius on the side of vigour and joyousness.

His poor 'Galatea' in the adjoining apartment has greatly suffered through time. She looks faded out; part of the design has disappeared; the sea and the sky are dull, and stained in patches. It is, nevertheless, the work of Raphael, as is evident in the gentleness of Galatea, in the action of the Cupid displaying his limbs so harmoniously, and in the originality of the conception of the sea gods and goddesses. The nude nymph, clasped by

the waist, yields with an expression of charming coquetry; the bearded triton with his Roman nose, who clutches and enfolds her in his nervous arms, displays the alertness and spirit of an animal god inhaling with the salt air of the sea huge drafts of force and contentment. Behind is a female with floating blonde hair seated on the back of the god that bears her off, her arched back bending with masterly elegance. The painter does not abandon himself to his subject; he remains sober and temperate, avoiding all extremes of action and expression, ever purifying his types and composing his attitudes. This natural love of proportion and those affectionate instincts, which, as with Mozart, led him to portray innate goodness, that delicacy of spirit and of organs which everywhere made him seek the noble and the gentle, all that is happy, generous, and worthy of tenderness, the singular good fortune of encountering art on its dividing line between perfection and decline, that unique advantage of a twofold education, which, after showing him Christian purity and innocence, made him sensible of the vigour and joyousness of paganism; all these gifts and circumstances were necessary in order to carry him onward to the summit. Vasari justly says: 'If one desires to see clearly how generous, how prodigal, heaven sometimes is in accumulating on one person the infinite wealth of its treasures, all those graces and rare endowments which are commonly scattered among several during a long period of time, let him contemplate Raphael Sanzio d'Urbino.'

The Museums, April 15.—There are some days when you can take up an idea, and follow it as on a straight road, and others like those I have just passed when you wander off right and left among the by-roads. Finding myself near the Vatican, I again ascended to its upper stories and revisited that precious museum. How many things a picture contains! The province of painting, as

with the other arts of design, is to gather an artist's ideas into one simultaneous concentrated effect. The other arts, music and poetry, disperse the impression.

I again contemplate the charming 'Christ' of Correggio, seated half-naked on a cloud, smiling and surrounded by angels, the most amiable, rosy, and graceful youth that ever existed; a 'Doge' by Titian, in yellow robes, so real, with such a distinct and striking personality, and yet so exquisitely painted, that the smallest fold of his laboured drapery is a luxury for the eye to rest on; an 'Entombment' by Caravaggio, full of figures and activity, studied from life,—vigorous porters with varicose veins, and young females bending over and weeping and drying their tears with all the sincerity of impressible youthfulness. To-day that which has impressed me most is a 'St. Catharine' by Murillo, of a strange, disturbing attractiveness. Her beauty is of a dangerous order; her oblique glance, and black downcast eyes gleam with secret ardour. What a contrast between this tint of a southern flower and that flame! How impassioned a lover, and what a devotee! In Raphael's works, the repose which sober colour gives and a sculptural attitude deprive the eyes of a portion of their vivacity. Spanish colour, on the contrary, is quivering; the unconscious sensuality of an ardent nature, the sudden palpitation of fugitive vehement emotions, the nervous excitement of voluptuousness and ecstacy, the force, the rage, of internal fires lurk in that flesh illuminated by its own intensity, in those ruddy tints drowned in those deep mysterious darks.

The 'Prodigal Son,' on the same side, is so affectingly suppliant! The Spaniard is of another race than the Italian; he is less well-balanced, less restrained by the harmonising influences of beauty; he is carried away by internal commotion, and expresses his feeling and ideas crudely even at the sacrifice of form.

On contemplating Raphael's 'Madonna di Foligno' a second time, I am confirmed in my opinion that this art is of another age: a modern must undergo some preparation in order to comprehend it. Which among the ordinary, unacquired sentiments, will interest him in the muscles of those two little nude angels, in that fold of the stomach defining the basin of the body, in the torsion by which the soft hip of the infant Jesus is raised up, and the flesh of the thigh pressed against the belly? All this appealed to a man of that time, and does not appeal to one of the present day. Our eyes fix themselves without effort on the charming humour of the two children, on the gentleness and modesty of the Virgin, on the timidity of her action, as she touches the blue girdle of the Infant; and if anything besides these, and the eye is sensitive, on the pleasing effect of the gilded border of her red robe.

Undoubtedly the celebrated 'Communion of St. Jerome,' by Domenichino, hanging opposite, is flimsy in comparison; his hand is not so sure; he is a little of a trickster; he finds his compensation in architecture, in imitations of showy embroideries, and in a rich display borrowed from the Venetians. Reason satisfies us that Raphael's style is the better. She tells us, similarly, that Racine and Port-Royal, Lysias and Plato, write better than we write. But our sentiments do not enter into their mould, and we cannot disembarrass ourselves of our sentiments.

The Capitol Museum.—I passed through the museum hastily on my first visit, and I was too weary. I believe that I have alluded to but one picture there, the 'Rape of Europa,' by Paul Veronese.

The principal one is an enormous picture of 'Saint Petronia,' by Guercino. The body is being taken out of the ground while the soul is received into Paradise. This is a composite work; the artist, according to the practice

of schools not primitive, having assembled together three or four kinds of effect. He addresses the eye with powerful contrasts of light and dark, and with the rich draperies of the saint and her betrothed. He imitates so literally as to produce illusion: the little boy holding the taper is of striking fidelity—you have met him somewhere in the streets; the two powerful men raising the body have all the vulgarity and masculine energy of their profession. He is dramatic: the humble attitude of the saint in heaven is charming, and the head crowned with roses furnishes a contrast to the tragic heaviness of the corpse enveloped in its pale winding-sheet; the aspect of Christ is tender and affectionate, and not, as elsewhere, a simple form. The entire subject—death, cold and lugubrious, contrasted with a happy triumphant resurrection—serves to arrest the attention of the multitude and excite its emotion. Painting thus regarded leaves its natural limits and approaches literature.

His 'Sibyl Persica,' under her peculiar poetic head-dress, is already quite modern. She has one of those pensive, complicated, indefinable expressions which pleases us so greatly, a spirit of infinite delicacy, trembling with nervous sensibility, and whose mysterious fascination will never end. . . . .

The 'Presentation of Christ at the Temple,' by Fra Bartolomeo. The contrast here is striking. Art and, I may say, civilisation were completely transformed between these two masters. Nothing could be nobler, simpler, more full of repose, and healthier than this art. You are the more impressed by it after having seen the combinations and novelties of Guercino. There are two epochs in Italy, that of Ariosto and the Renaissance and that of Tasso and the Catholic Restoration.

A 'Magdalen,' by Tintoretto, on a heap of straw, dark, haggard, with hair dishevelled, and profoundly penitent.

She is weeping and praying. Through the entrance of the cavern gleams the mournful crescent moon; that glimpse of the desert, with the terrors of night above the poor sobbing creature, is heart-rending. The more one sees of Tintoretto, the more does one find in him on a grand scale the same temperament as Delacroix, the same sentiment of the tragic in the real, the same impetuous sympathy excited by contact with outward objects, and the same talent for expressing the crudity, nakedness, and energy of truth and of passion.

Wandering around the Capitol lately, I entered the Academy of St. Luke. Few galleries in Rome are equal to this.

Here are two large pictures by Guido. One represents 'Fortune' a naked goddess, flying above the earth, and holding a diadem in her hand. The other is the 'Rape of Ariadne;' the deep blue sea extends into infinity, and a tall white female stands on a rock, while another approaches her leading a handsome youth, draped, and near by is a reclining female playing with an infant. Nothing could be more easy and elegant. The painters of this age possessed all types, and this one delighted in the softer and more agreeable reminiscences of Greek beauty. His painting, however, lacks substance; it is too white, and reminds you of the platitude and conventionality of the tragedies of the eighteenth century.

A somewhat dilapidated fresco by Raphael places this deficiency in full light. It is only a naked infant, but as strong, animated, and simple as a Pompeian antique; the eyes are beaming; this solid young figure shows the first awakening of curiosity in the soul.

A small picture, scarcely more than a sketch, by Rubens, is a masterpiece. Two nude women are crowning a companion, whilst small white Cupids overhead form a garland. They are not too fat, and their action is so natural, so

elegant! This term seems strange as applied to Rubens. But nobody like him has so appreciated the flexibility of the human form, and so directly recorded his impressions. Life in other artists, on comparing them with him, seems to be stagnant. He alone has comprehended the fluid softness of flesh, the *instantaneous.* This, in fact, is the nature of life; it is the jet of an exhaustless fountain that never remains stationary; in animated flesh the blood rushes to and fro with the velocity of a torrent; this pulsation of a substance in incessant motion is visible in his freshness of tint and in the fluidity of his forms. But I risk saying too much on Rubens; no works afford such a rich and inexhaustible treasury for the observer of man.

On this domain the Venetians alone approach him. They reduce his exuberance, but they ennoble it. There are Palma Vecchios and Titians here whose voluptuous richness and superb flesh reveal a whole world beyond that of Roman art. Palma Vecchio stands at its entrance; his splendid vigorous colour, like a glaring ruddy sunset, his powerful modelling and the magnificent torsions of his substantial figures announce a primitive taste, that of *force*; in every school you first discover the simple and grave type; only later do they refine and render it seductive.

Titian stands in the centre, equally strong on the side of sensuality and on that of energy. In a beautiful Italian landscape, fading away in blue distance, and near a fountain whose waters are disbursed by a little Cupid, his Callisto has fallen, violently stripped by her nymphs. No mere prettiness or epicureanism exists in this bold composition. The nymphs do their office brutally, like common women with vigorous arms. One, especially, erect and with a superb, almost masculine, torso, is a virago capable of giving a man a drubbing. Another, with the cruel malice of an experienced hand, bends the back of

the poor culprit, in order the sooner to detect the signs of her misfortune. But in his other picture, 'Vanity,' naked on a white bed with a sceptre and crown, a waving and elegant figure so seductively soft, is the most alluring mistress that a patrician could deck with his purple, and make use of at evening to feed his practised eyes with exquisite sensuality.—Paul Veronese comes last. He is a decorator, free of the virile gigantic lustiness which often carries Titian away; the most skilful of all in the art of distilling and combining those pleasures which pure colour in its contrasts, gradations, and harmonies, affords the eye. His picture represents a woman occupied in arranging her hair before a mirror held by a little Cupid. A violet curtain enlivens with its faded tints the beautiful flesh framed in by white linen. A small plaited border rests its delicate frill on the amber softness of the breast. The auburn hair is gathered in curls over the brow on the edge of the temples. You see the forms of the thigh and breasts beneath the chemise. With that vague vinous blush on those mingled faded darks of dead leaves, the entire flesh, permeated with inward light, palpitates, and its round pulpy forms seem to be trembling as if with a caress.

The picture the most contemplated is 'Lucretia and Sextus,' by Cagnacci, an artist of I know not what epoch, but certainly a late one. You may imagine its dramatic subject and its treatment with a view to dramatic effect. Naked, on white linen and red drapery, lying on her back with her head lower than her bosom, she is struggling with and repelling the breast of the villain. This charming delicate female form crushed down by physical force excites pity. The slightest details are affecting; in her waving hair there are white pearls unloosening themselves. He, however, in his blue doublet striped with gold, seems to be a ruffian of the day, some assassin

Osio, and grand seignor, like him of whom the trial of Virginia de Leyva shows us the manly bearing, fine manners and assassinations. A slave awaits under a large portico holding his master's sword. Similar expeditions were made to the convent of Monza, near Milan, at the beginning of the seventeenth century.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE MANNERS AND CUSTOMS OF THE RENAISSANCE—PHYSICAL ACTION AND PICTURESQUE POMP—IMAGES AND NOT IDEAS FILL THE MINDS OF THIS EPOCH.

The Sistine Chapel and the Sixteenth Century.—Do you remember our visit last year to the École de Beaux Arts with Louis B——, a cultivated, intelligent, and learned man, if there is one, to see the copy of Michael Angelo's 'Last Judgment'? Yawning, and diverting himself at our expense, he declared that he preferred the 'Last Judgment' of the English artist Martin. 'At all events,' he exclaimed, 'you have got the scene itself, heaven, earth, lightning, and the immense throng of the dead flocking from their graves by legions under the supernatural light of the last day and night. Here there is neither heaven, earth, hell, nor abyss; nothing but two or three hundred figures posing.' You replied that Michael Angelo did not paint heaven, earth, hell, or abyss, that he did not regard infinity and supernatural light as personages, that he was a sculptor with the human form as his sole means of expression, that his fresco must be regarded as a sort of bas-relief in which the grandeur and spirit of his attitudes replace the rest; and that if we of the present day, in this final tragedy, give prominence to space, lightning, and an indistinct throng of diminutive figures, it was then given to a few colossi expressing the same tragic sentiment through draped and difficult attitudes.

Whence comes this change? And why should that

age be so much interested in muscles? It is because muscles were closely observed. I have reread the writers of the time, the details of the education and violent manners and customs of the sixteenth century; if one wishes to understand an art, it is important to study the spirit of the people to which it appeals.

'I require,' says Castiglione, in giving the portrait of the accomplished gentleman, 'that our courtier be a complete horseman; and, as it is a special merit of Italians to govern the horse with the bridle, to manœuvre him systematically—especially horses difficult of control—to run with the lance, and to joust, let him in these matters be an Italian among the best. In tourneys and passages at arms, and in races between barriers, let him be one of the good among the best of the French. In cudgelling, bull-fighting, casting darts and lances, let him excel among the Spaniards. It is proper, moreover, that he should be skilled in running and in jumping. Another noble exercise is tennis. And I do not esteem it a slight merit to be able to leap a horse.' All these were not simple precepts given in conversation and in books, but were in conformity with conduct and customs. Julian de Medici, assassinated by the Pazzi, is praised by his biographer, not only for his poetic talent and his tact as a connoisseur, but for his skill in horsemanship, in wrestling, and in throwing the javelin. Cæsar Borgia, the noted politician, is as accomplished in pugilism as in intrigue. 'He is twenty-seven years of age,' says a contemporary, 'handsome and tall, and the pope, his father, holds him in great fear. He has slain six savage bulls in contending against them with a pike on horseback, and cleft the head of one of these bulls at the first blow.' Italy at this time furnishes Europe with its most skilful masters of arms; in the engravings of that day we see the pupil naked with a poniard in one hand and a sword in the other, preparing

himself, and rendering his muscles supple from head to foot, like the antique athlete or wrestler.

And it is necessary, for public order is badly maintained. 'On the 20th September,' says a chronicler, 'there was great tumult in the city of Rome, and the merchants closed their shops. Those who were in their fields, or in their vineyards, returned home in all haste, and seized their arms, because it was announced for a certainty that Pope Innocent VIII. was dead.' The feeble ties holding society together were easily broken, and people returned to a savage state, each one profiting by the occasion to rid himself of his enemies. It must not be inferred by this that they abstained from attacking each other in times of tranquillity. The private feuds of the Colonna and the Orsini kept Rome in as great a state of confusion as in the darkest centuries of the mediæval epoch. 'Even in the city many murders were committed, and robberies by day and by night, and scarcely a day passed that some one was not slain. The third day of September, a certain Salvator attacked his enemy, the Signor Beneaccaduto, notwithstanding he was bound over to keep the peace with him under a penalty of 500 ducats, and he gave him two mortal blows, from which he died. On the fourth day the Pope sent his vicecameriere, with the conservatori and all the people, to destroy Salvator's house. They destroyed it, and on that fourth day of September, Jerome, the brother of the said Salvator, was hung.' I might cite fifty similar examples. At this time man is too powerful, too much accustomed to do himself justice, too sudden and quick in his treatment of facts. 'One day,' says Guicciardini, 'Trivulce slew in the market-place, with his own hand, some butchers, who, with the insolence customary with this class, opposed the collection of taxes from which they had not been exempted.' As far down as 1537, lists were

kept open at Ferrara, where deadly duels were permitted even to strangers, and to which boys resorted to fight with knives. The Princess of Faenza set four assassins on her husband, and, seeing that he resisted them, jumped from her bed and stabbed him herself. Upon this, her father entreats Lorenzo de Medicis to solicit the Pope for a remission of the ecclesiastical censure of the act, alleging that he thinks of 'providing her with another husband.' The Prince of Imola is assassinated, and his body thrown from a window; and on threatening his widow, shut up in the fortress, with the death of her children if she refused to surrender, she ascends to the battlements, and with a very expressive gesture, replies that 'the mould remains in which to cast others.' Consider, again, the spectacles daily witnessed in Rome. 'The second Sunday, a man in the Borgo, masked, uttered offensive words against the Duke Valentinois. The duke, on being informed of them, caused him to be seized, and had his hand cut off, also the anterior portion of the tongue, which was attached to the little finger of the severed member.' 'The follower of this same duke suspended two old men and eight old women by their arms, after having kindled a fire under their feet, in order to make them confess where they had concealed their money, and they not knowing, or not wishing to tell where it was, died under the said torture.' Another day, the duke caused some convicts (*gladiandi*) to be brought into the court of the palace, where, dressed in his finest clothes, and before a select and numerous company, he transpierced them with arrows. 'He also slew Perotto, the Pope's favourite, under the very robe of the Pope, so that the blood spurted up in the Pope's face.' They were perfect throat-cutters, this family. He had already caused his brother-in-law to be assailed with a sword, and the Pope had had the wounded man taken care of; but the Duke exclaimed, 'What cannot be done

at dinner may be done at supper.' 'And one day, August 17, he entered his room, as the young man was already up, and obliging his wife and sister to leave it, summoned three assassins, and the said young man was strangled. . . . After this he slew his brother, the Duke of Gandie, and caused him to be thrown into the Tiber.' And on demanding of the fisherman, who witnessed the affair, why he had not informed the governor of the city of it, the man replied that 'during his lifetime he had seen on various nights more than one hundred bodies thrown in at the same place without anybody having given themselves any concern about it.'

All this comes out in bold relief on reading the memoirs of Cellini. We of the present day, in the hands of the state, and entrusting ourselves to judges and *gendarmes,* scarcely comprehend the natural right of force through which, before societies were regularly established, man defended and avenged himself, and obtained satisfaction for all his wrongs. In France, Spain, and England, the savage brutes of the feudal period were restrained by the feudal conception of honour, which, if not a check, kept them at least within certain limits; the duel was substituted for private revenge, and men usually killed each other according to recognised rules, in the presence of witnesses, and at an appointed spot. But here all murderous instincts found vent in the streets. The various scenes of violence recounted by Cellini cannot be enumerated; and not alone those in which he was concerned, but others surrounding him. A bishop, to whom he refused to deliver a certain silver vase, ordered his retainers to sack his house; Cellini seizes his arquebuss and barricades his doors. Another jeweller named Piloto is the chief of a certain company, 'During his sojourn in Rome, Rosso had spoken disparagingly of the works of Raphael, and the pupils of this illustrious master deter-

mined to kill him.' Vasari, sleeping with an apprentice named Manno, 'scratched the skin off of one of his legs, thinking he was scratching himself, for he never trimmed his nails,' and 'Manno determined to kill him.' Cellini's brother, on hearing that his pupil Bertino Aldobrandi had just been slain, 'uttered so great a cry of rage that one could have heard him ten miles off; he then said to Giovanni, "Thou canst at least inform me who slew him?" Giovanni replied, "Yes; that it was the man who wore a large two-handed sword, and with a blue plume in his cap." My poor brother advanced, and having recognised the murderer by this sign, sprung with his usual alacrity and bravery into the midst of the guard, and there, before they could arrest him, he kicked the man in the belly and in various other parts, and levelled him to the ground with his sword haft.' He is himself almost immediately knocked down by a blow with an arquebuss, and then we see the *vendetta* fury fully display itself. Cellini can no longer eat or sleep; the tempest within rages so violently that he thinks he will die if he finds no relief. 'I resolved one evening to rid myself from this torment, without considering how little there was to approve of in the effort. . . . I approached the murderer cautiously with a large poignard, similar to a hunting-knife. I was hoping to cleave his head with a back-handed stroke, but he turned so quickly, that my weapon only fell on the point of the left shoulder and broke the bone. He arose, dropped his sword, and, suffering with pain, took to his heels. I pursued him, and overtaking him in a few paces raised my poignard over his head, which he held low, so that my weapon on entering at the nape of the neck buried itself deeply, and in spite of all my efforts I could not withdraw it.' A little while after this, and, ever on a public thoroughfare, Cellini kills Benedetto, and next Pompeio, who had offended him. Cardinal Medicis and Cardinal

Cornaro think it a fine thing. 'As for the Pope,' says Cellini, after one of these murders, 'he regarded me with a threatening aspect which made me tremble, but, as soon as he had examined my work, his countenance began to brighten.' And at another time, when Cellini was accused before him, 'Know,' said the Pope, 'that men high in their profession like Benvenuto are not amenable to the laws, and he, the least of all, because I know how right he is.' Such was public morality. All this lying in ambush, meanwhile, was prompted by the most insignificant motives. His friend Luigi had taken a mistress, a courtesan, to whom he, Cellini, was indifferent, but whom he had entreated him not to take. In a furious mood he placed himself in ambush, fell upon them both with his sword, wounded them, does not consider them sufficiently punished, and speaks of their death afterwards, which was not long delayed, with satisfaction. As far as private morality is concerned, Cellini has mystic visions while in prison; his guardian angel appears to him; he converses with an invisible spirit; he has devotional transports, the effect of solitude and confinement on natures like his. When at liberty, he is a good Christian after the fashion of the day. Having made a successful cast of his 'Perseus,' he set out, he says, 'singing psalms and hymns to the glory of God, which I continued to do during the whole journey.' We find similar sentiments in the Duke of Ferrara; 'Having been attacked with a grave malady which, during forty-eight hours, prevented a discharge of urine, he betook himself to God and ordered the payment of all neglected obligations.' One of his predecessors, Hercules d'Este, possesses a similar conscience. At the end of an orgie, he proceeds to chant the service with his troop of French musicians, a man who cut off the hands and plucked out the eyes of two hundred and eighty prisoners before selling them, and who on Holy Thursday

performed the ceremony of washing the feet of the poor. Such likewise is the piety of Alexander VI., who on hearing of the assassination of his son, the Duke of Gandie, beats his breast, and, sobbing, confesses his crimes to the assembled cardinals. The imagination in those days is affected through one or the other of the senses, sometimes with voluptuousness, sometimes with rage and sometimes with fear. From time to time thoughts of the horrors of hell make people shudder, and they fancy they may balance accounts with wax tapers, crossing themselves, and paternosters; but, fundamentally, they are pagans, genuine barbarians, and the only voice they listen to is that of the turbulent flesh, quivering nerves, restless members and overcharged brains buzzing with a confusion of forms and colours.

One need not look for much delicacy, I fancy, in their way of doing things. Cardinal Hippolyte d'Este, who put out his brother's eyes receives an envoy of the Pope, the bearer of an offensive brief, with a thrashing. We know how Pope Julius II., in a quarrel with Michael Angelo, caned a bishop for attempting to interfere. Cellini is honoured with an audience by Pope Paul III. 'He was,' says Cellini, 'in the best possible humour, and so much the better for the reason that all this occurred on the day he was accustomed to indulge in a hearty debauch, after which he vomited.' It is impossible to follow the narration by Burchard, his master of ceremonies, of the fêtes given at the Vatican in the presence of Alexander VI., Cæsar Borgia, and the Duchess Lucretia; nor even of a certain little impromptu amusement which these three personages witnessed from a window, 'with great laughter and satisfaction.' A *vivandière* would blush at it. People as yet are not very polished. Crudity frightens nobody. Poets, like Berni, and story-tellers, like the bishop Bandello, enter upon the most hazardous subjects and treat them with the most

precise details. What we call good taste is a product of the *salon*, and is only born into the world under Louis XIV. What we call ecclesiastical decency is a counter-stroke of the Reformation, and only established in the times of St. Charles Borromeo. Physical instincts still expose their nudity in the strongest light; neither social refinements nor a sense of propriety have yet arisen to temper or disguise the undiminished vigour of the raging senses. 'Sometimes, it happened,' says Cellini, 'on penetrating unawares into the private apartments of the Duchess, I surprised her, engaged in an occupation by no means royal. . . . She then flew into such a rage that I was terrified.' One day, at the Duke's table, he gets into a quarrel with the sculptor Bandinelli, who grossly insults him. By a miracle he restrains himself, but in a moment after he says to him, 'I tell you plainly, that if you do not send the marble to me at my house, you may seek your place in another world, for, cost what it will, I will rip up your belly in this.' Coarse terms fly about, as in Rabelais, also tavern obscenities, while the disgusting humour of drunkards displays itself even in the palace. 'What a hog I am, I exclaimed, what a fool! what a jackass? Does all your skill make no more noise in the world than this? At the same time I jumped on a stick.' Cellini appends four lines of poetry to this adventure, and 'the Duke and Duchess both laughed.' Nowadays, the valets of any respectable mansion would put such odd characters outside the door. But when a man uses his fists like a butcher, or his sword like a bravo, it is natural for him to possess the humour of both butcher and bravo.*

* Cellini relates the manner in which he behaved in a quarrel with one of his mistresses. 'I seized her by the hair and dragged her about the room, kicking and pounding her until I became weary and was obliged to stop.'

Diversions of a particular species are likewise natural to them. What a man of the people prefers, that is to say, a man accustomed to corporeal exercise, and whose senses are rude, is an order of entertainment addressed to the eye, and especially one in which he is himself an actor. He is fond of parades, and gladly participates in them; he leaves niceties of observation, conversation, and criticism to the effeminate and the refined, who frequent drawing-rooms. He likes to look at acrobats, clowns, and rope-dancers, men who grimace and exhibit themselves in pantomimes and processions, also reviews of troops, long cavalcades defiling, and variegated brilliant uniforms. Now that the people of Paris frequent the theatres, it is by such means that the popular theatres attract them. In this frame of mind a man is caught through his eyes. What he desires to see is not a noble intellect but a handsomely dressed muscular figure erect in a saddle, and when instead of one there are hundreds, when embroidery, gold lace, feathers, silk, and brocade glitter in broad sunlight amidst rattling drums and trumpets, when the triumph and tumult of the fête penetrate to his senses through every channel, and his whole being is aroused with involuntary sympathy, then, if a wish still remains, it is to mount a horse himself, and, in similar costume, form one of the gay throng parading before the attendant multitude. Such, at this time, is the reigning taste in Italy; princely cavalcades, magnificent public festivals, entries into cities, and masquerades. Galeazzo Sforza, Duke of Milan, pays a visit to Lorenzo de' Medici, and takes with him, besides a body-guard of five hundred foot, a hundred men-at-arms, fifty servants dressed in silk and silver, two thousand gentlemen and domestics of his suite, five hundred braces of dogs and an infinite number of falcons, and his journey cost him two hundred thousand gold ducats. On the other hand, the city honours him with three public

spectacles: one an 'Annunciation of the Virgin,' another, the 'Ascension of Christ,' and the last, the 'Descent of the Holy Ghost.'—Cardinal San-Sisto expends twenty thousand ducats on a single fête in honour of the Duchess of Ferrara, and afterwards makes the tour of Italy with such a numerous and magnificent cortége, that only the pomp of his brother the Pope could equal it.—The Duchess Lucretia Borgia enters Rome with two hundred ladies, all on horseback, each magnificently dressed, and accompanied with a cavalier.—At Florence, a grand mythological fête is gotten up, called 'The Triumph of Camilla,' with innumerable chariots, banners, escutcheons, and triumphal arches. Lorenzo de' Medici, in order to augment the interest of the spectacle, requests the Pope to send him an elephant; the Pope simply sends two leopards and a panther; he would himself like to be present, but the dignity of his position restrains him; a number of cardinals more fortunate arrive and enjoy the fête. A painter, Piero di Cosimo, with his friends, arrange another of a highly lugubrious order, called 'The Triumph of Death.' This is a car drawn by black oxen, on which are painted skulls, bones, and crosses, in white, and on the car itself a figure of Death with his scythe, the car containing sepulchres, from which arise skeleton figures who chant funereal hymns when it halts. Among fifty fêtes similar to this, read in Vasari the description of that which signalises the commencement of the century; one may judge by its brilliancy, as well as by its details, of the picturesque tastes which then filled all breasts. The object of this was to celebrate the advent of Pope Leo X. Lorenzo de' Medici, desiring that the Bronconi confraternity, of which he was the chief, should surpass in magnificence that of the Diamond, ordered Jacopo Nardi, 'a noble, intelligent man,' to compose for him six cars. Pontormo painted them, and Baccio Ban-

dinelli decorated them with sculpture. All the wealth and all the art of the city were displayed upon them; every invention and every resource of luxury and of recent discovery, every image and souvenir of the history of ancient poetry contributed to their embellishment. Chargers, caparisoned with the skins of lions and tigers, with housings and stirrups of gold and bridles fringed with silver, advanced in long procession; behind them followed heifers and mules superbly decked, and monstrous fantastic buffaloes disguised as elephants, and horses travestied as winged griffins. Shepherds in sable and ermine skins and crowned with garlands, priests in antique togas bearing candelabra and vases of gold, senators, lictors, and knights in gay armour, displaying their fasces and trophies, and jurisconsults, in long robes on horseback, all surrounded the cars, on which eminent Roman personages appeared amid the insignia of their offices and the monuments of their exploits. Through their proud nudity, valiant attitudes, and grand flowing drapery, these painted and sculptured forms heightened the pagan effect of this pagan procession, and taught energy and joyousness to living companions, who to the clang of trumpets and the acclamations of the crowd displayed themselves on the horses and cars around them. The generous sun, shining overhead, again illuminated a world similar to that of former days in the same place, that is to say, the same deep sentiment of natural poetic joyousness, the same blooming physical health and energy, the same eternal youthful inspiration, and the same triumphant reverential devotion to beauty. And when the spectators, after witnessing this long and rich array of splendid accoutrements, these rustling, flowing draperies, the bright glitter of silver scarfs, the yellow reflections of golden garlands and arabesques, saw the last car approaching with its pyramid of living figures, and above these, by the side of a ver-

dant laurel, a naked infant, personifying the Renaissance of the golden age, well might they believe that they had for a moment reanimated the noble lost antiquity, and, after a winter of fifteen centuries were again beholding the human plant flowering in all its grandeur.

These are the spectacles then daily witnessed in an Italian city; such the luxurious taste of princes, cities, and corporations. The humblest artizan devoted his eyes, his hands, and his heart to them. Admiration of fine forms, imposing ceremony, and picturesque decoration constituted a popular sentiment. The carpenter at evening talked to his wife about them, and they were discussed around the tables of taverns, each one claiming that the decorations on which he had laboured were the most beautiful; each one with his own preferences, judgment, and favourite artist as nowadays, the pupils of a painter's studio. The result was that the painter and the sculptor addressed not merely a few critics but the entire community. What now remains to us of ancient poetic pomp? The 'Descent of La Courtille,' * with its foul yelling drunkards, and the procession of fat oxen in which half-a-dozen poor fellows shiver in flesh-coloured 'tights,' amid the jokes and jeers of the populace. Picturesque customs are now reduced to two street parades, and athletic life to wrestling at fairs, where some Herculean clown gets ten cents an hour to turn himself inside out for the amusement of soldiers and peasants. These customs constitute the vivifying influences which everywhere gave birth to and developed high art. They have disappeared, and hence our inability to produce the same results. The best a painter can now do is to shut himself up in his studio, and, surrounding himself with antique vases, nourishing himself on archæology, living amidst the purest models of Greek and Renaissance life and sequestrating himself from

* A fête in Paris of a low popular character.

all modern ideas, by dint of study and artifice, create for himself a similar atmosphere. We are familiar with prodigies of this stamp, such as an Overbeck, who, through prayer, fasting, and a monastic life at Rome, imagines he has revived the mystical forms of Fra Angelico; a Göthe who, converted into a pagan, and having copied antique torsos and provided himself with every resource which erudition, philosophy, observation, and genius could accumulate, succeeds through the pliancy and universality of the most cultivated imagination that ever existed in mounting on a German pedestal an almost Grecian Iphigenia. With a skilfully-constructed hot-house, and well-contrived heaters, a man may raise and ripen oranges even in Normandy; but the hot-house costs an immense sum, and out of ten oranges produced nine will prove acid abortions,—and, if you offer the tenth to a Normandy peasant, he will at heart much prefer his cider and brandy.

We must admit that a singular combination of things existed in those days; we have no experience of the same commingling of coarseness and culture, of a swordsman's habits with the tastes of the antiquary, of the customs of bandits with the conversations of a man of letters. Man then is in a transitional state; he is issuing from the mediæval to take his place in the modern epoch, or, rather, the two ages are at their confluence, each penetrating the other in the most wonderful manner and with most surprising contrasts. As government centralisation and monarchical loyalty could not be established in Italy, the middle ages, through private feuds and appeals to force, lasted there longer than elsewhere. In Italy, the race being precocious, the crust of the Germanic invasion could only partially cover it; the modern spirit developed itself earlier there than elsewhere through the acquisition of wealth, a fertile creative power, and the free-

dom of the intellect. They are farther advanced, and at the same time more backward than other peoples; more backward in the sentiment of justice, more advanced in the sentiment of beauty, and their taste conforms to their condition. Always will a society place before itself in its spectacles the objects in which it is most interested. Always has society some representative figure which it reproduces and contemplates in its art. At the present day this figure is the ambitious plebeian who covets the pleasures of Paris, who desires to descend from his plain room in the attic to a luxurious apartment on the first floor; in short, the parvenu, the labourer, the intriguer, the business man on 'Change, or in his cabinet, such as the romances of Balzac portray. In the seventeenth century it was the courtier, versed in good breeding and a recusant in all domestic matters, the fine talker, the most elegant, the most polished and adroit of men, such as Racine portrays, and as the romances of Mdlle. de Scudery attempt to show him. In the sixteenth century in Italy he is the sound healthy man, well-proportioned and richly clothed, energetic and capable, such as its painters represent him in their beautiful attitudes. The Duke d'Urbino, and Cæsar Borgia, and Alphonso d'Este, and Leo X., undoubtedly listened to poets and men of thought, but only at an evening entertainment, while diverting themselves after supper in some villa, surrounded by colonnades and under richly decorated ceilings. Substantially, however, they delight in that which ministers to the eye and the body, such as masquerades, cavalcades, grand architectural forms, thé imposing air of statues and of painted figures, and the superb decoration everywhere around them. Any other diversion would be insipid to them. They are not critics, philosophers, and frequenters of the drawing-room; they require something palpable and tangible. If you doubt this, look at their

amusements, those of Paul II., who ordered races before him of horses, asses, cattle, children, old men and Jews 'crammed' beforehand, to render them as stupid as possible, and 'who laughed to split his sides;' those of Alexander VI., which cannot be described, and of Leo X., who, booted and spurred, passed the season in hunting stags and wild boars, who kept a monk capable of 'swallowing a pigeon at one mouthful, and forty eggs in succession,' who was served at table with dishes in the shape of monkeys and crows, in order to enjoy the surprise of his guests, who surrounded himself with buffoons, who had 'La Calandra' and 'La Mandragora' performed in his presence, and who delighted in obscene stories and who supported parasites. The natural *finesse* of such minds employed itself on the subtleties, not of sentiments or of ideas, but of colours and forms, and, to satisfy them, a world of artists is seen to form itself around them, chief amongst which is Michael Angelo.

CHAPTER IX.

MICHAEL ANGELO—HIS LIFE, CHARACTER, AND WORKS—THE SISTINE CHAPEL—THE LAST JUDGMENT.

THERE are four men in the world of art and of literature exalted above all others, and to such a degree as to seem to belong to another race, namely, Dante, Shakespeare, Beethoven, and Michael Angelo. No profound knowledge, no full possession of all the resources of art, no fertility of imagination, no originality of intellect, sufficed to secure them this position, for these they all had; these, moreover, are of secondary importance; that which elevated them to this rank is their soul, the soul of a fallen deity, struggling irresistibly after a world disproportionate to our own, always suffering and combating, always toiling and tempestuous, and, as incapable of being sated as of sinking, devoting itself in solitude to erecting before men colossi as ungovernable, as vigorous, and as sadly sublime as its own insatiable and impotent desire.

Michael Angelo is thus a modern spirit, and it is for this reason, perhaps, that we are able to comprehend him without effort. Was he more unfortunate than other men? Regarding things externally, it seems that he was not. If he was tormented by an avaricious family, if on two or three occasions the caprice or the death of a patron prevented the execution of an important work, designed or commenced, if his country fell into servitude, if minds around him degenerated or became weak, all these are not unusual disappointments, or serious and painful

obstacles. How many among his contemporary artists experienced greater? Suffering, however, must be measured by inward emotion, and not by outward circumstance, and, if ever a spirit existed capable of transports of enthusiasm and tremors of indignation, it was his. He was sensitive to excess, and therefore 'timid,' lonely, and ill at ease in the petty concerns of society, and to such an extent, for example, that he could never bring himself to entertain at a dinner. Men of deep, enduring emotion, maintain reserve in order not to render themselves a spectacle, falling back upon introspection for lack of outward sympathy. From his youth up, society was distasteful to him; he had so applied himself to study in solitude, as to be considered proud and insane. Later, at the acme of his fame, he plunged still deeper into it; he took solitary walks, was served by one domestic, and passed entire weeks on scaffoldings wholly absorbed in self-communion. And this because he could hold converse with no other mind. Not only were his sentiments too powerful, but again they were too exalted. From his earliest years he cherished a passionate love for all noble things, and first for his art, to which he gave himself up entirely, notwithstanding his father's brutality, investigating all its accessories with compass and scalpel in hand, and with such extraordinary persistence that he became ill; and next, his self-respect, which he maintained at the risk of his life, facing imperious popes even to forcing them to regard him as an equal, braving them 'more than a King of France would have done.' He held ordinary pleasures in contempt; 'although rich, he lived as a poor man;' frugally, often dining on a crust of bread; and laboriously, treating himself severely, sleeping but little, and often in his clothes, without luxury of any kind, without household display, without care for money, giving away statues and pictures to his friends, 20,000 francs to his ser-

vant, 30,000 and 40,000 francs at once to his nephew, besides countless other sums to the rest of his family. And more than this; he lived like a monk, without wife or mistress, chaste in a voluptuous court, knowing but one love and that austere and platonic, and for one woman as proud and as noble as himself. At evening, after the labour of the day, he wrote sonnets in her praise and knelt in spirit before her, as Dante at the feet of Beatrice, praying to her to sustain his weaknesses and keep him in the 'right path.' He bowed his soul before her as before an angel of virtue, showing the same fervid exaltation in her service as that of the mystics and knights of old. He felt in her beauty a revelation of divine essence; he beheld her 'still enveloped in her fleshly covering ascending radiant to the bosom of God.' 'He who has an affection for her,' he said, exalts himself to heaven by faith, and death becomes sweet.' Through her he attained to supreme love; in the prime source of all things he first formed his affection for her, and led by her eyes he would return thence with her.* She died before him, and for a long time he remained 'downstricken, as if deranged;' several years later, his heart still cherished a great grief, the regret at not having on her deathbed kissed her brow or cheek instead of her hand. The rest of his life corresponds with such sentiments. He took great delight in the 'arguments of learned men,' and also in the perusal of the poets, especially Petrarch and Dante, whom he almost knew by heart. 'Would to heaven,' he one day wrote, 'I were such as he, even at the price of such a fate! For his bitter exile and his virtue I would exchange the most fortunate lot in this world!' The books he preferred were those noted for an imprint of grandeur, the Old and New Testaments, and especially the terribly earnest discourses

* These expressions are all taken from Michael Angelo's sonn ets.

of Savonarola, his master and friend, whom he saw attached to the pillory, strangled and burnt, and whose 'living word would always remain in his soul.' A man who feels and lives thus knows not how to accommodate himself to this life; he is too *different.* The admiration of others produces no self-satisfaction. 'He disparaged his own works, never finding that his hand expressed the conception formed within. One day, aged and decrepit, some one encountered him near the Colosseum on foot and in the snow; on being asked, 'Where are you going?' 'To school,' he replied, 'to try and learn something.' Despair seized him more than once; having hurt his leg, he shut himself up in his house and longed for death. Finally, he goes so far as to separate himself from himself, from that art which was his monarch and his idol; 'picture or statue, let nothing now divert my soul from that divine love on the cross, whose arms are always open to receive us!' The last sigh of a great soul in a degenerate age, and among an enslaved people! Self-renunciation is his last refuge. For sixty years his works do no more than make visible the heroic combat which maintained itself in his breast to the end.

Superhuman personages as miserable as ourselves, forms of gods rigid with earthly passion, an Olympus of jarring human tragedies, such is the sentiment of the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. What injustice to compare with his works the 'Sibyls' and the 'Isaiah' of Raphael! They are vigorous and beautiful, I admit, and I do not dispute that they testify to an equally profound art; but the first glance suffices to show that they have not the same soul: they do not issue like these from an impetuous, irresistible will; they have never experienced like these the same thrill and tension of a nervous being, concentrated and launching itself forth at the risk of ruin. There are souls whose impressions flash out like

lightning, and whose actions are thunderbolts. Such are the personages of Michael Angelo. His colossal Jeremiah, musing, with his enormous head resting on his enormous hand—on what does he muse with his downcast eyes? His floating beard descending in curls to his breast, his labourer's hands furrowed with swollen veins, his wrinkled brow, his impenetrable mask, the low mutter about to burst forth, all suggest one of those barbarian kings, a dark hunter of the urus, coming to dash his impotent rage against the gates of the Roman empire. Ezekiel turns around suddenly, with an impetuous interrogation on his lips, and so suddenly, that the air raises from his shoulder a portion of his mantle. The aged Persica, under the long folds of her falling hood, is indefatigably reading from a book which her knotted hands hold up to her penetrating eyes. Jonas throws back his head, appalled at the frightful apparition before him, his fingers involuntarily counting the forty days that still remain to Nineveh. Lybia, in great agitation, descends, bearing the enormous book she has seized. Erythræa is a Pallas of a haughtier and more warlike expression than her antique Athenian sister. Around these, on the curve of the arch, appear nude adolescents straining their backs and displaying their limbs, sometimes proudly extended and reposing, and again struggling or darting forward, while some are shouting, and with their rigid thighs and grasping feet seem to be furiously attacking the wall. Beneath is an old stooping pilgrim seating himself, a woman kissing an infant wrapped in its swaddling clothes, a despairing man looking obliquely and bitterly defying destiny, a young girl with a beautiful smiling face tranquilly sleeping; and twenty others, the grandest of human forms, that speak in all the details of their attitudes, and in the least of the folds of their garments.

These are simply the contours of the arch. The arch itself, two hundred feet long, displays the historical record of the book of Genesis, the deliverance of Israel, the creation of the world, of man, and of woman, the fall and exile of the first couple, the deluge, the brazen serpent, the murder of Holophernes, the punishment of Haman—an entire population of figures of tragic interest. You lie down on the old carpet covering the floor and look up. In vain are they a hundred feet high, smoked, scaling off and crowded to suffocation, and so remote from the demands of our art, our age, and our intellect—you comprehend them at once. This man is so great, that differences of time and of nation do not subsist in his presence.

The difficulty is not in yielding to his sway, but in accounting for it. When, after your ears are filled with the thunder of his voice, and retiring to a distance, and in repose, so that only its reverberations reach you, and when reflection has succeeded to emotion, and you strive to discover the secret by which he renders its tones so vibrating, you at length arrive at this,—he possessed the soul of Dante, and he passed his life in the study of the human figure: these are the two sources of his power. The human form, as he represents it, is all expression, its skeleton, muscles, drapery, attitudes and proportions; so that the spectator is affected simultaneously by all parts of the subject. And this form expresses energy, pride, audacity, and despair, the rage of ungovernable passion or of heroic will, and in such a way as to move the spectator with the most powerful impressions. Moral energy emanates from every physical detail, and we feel its startling reaction corporeally and instantaneously.

Look at Adam asleep near Eve, whom Jehovah has just taken from his side. Never was creature buried in such profound, deathlike slumber. His enormous body is

completely relaxed, and its enormity only renders this the more striking. On awaking, those pendant arms, those inert thighs, will crush some lion in their embrace. In the 'Brazen Serpent' the man with a snake coiled round his waist, and tearing it off, with arm bent back and his body distorted as he extends his thigh, suggests the strife between primitive mortals and the monsters whose slimy forms ploughed the antediluvian soil. Masses of bodies, intermingled one with the other and overthrown with their heels in the air, with arms bent like bows and with convulsive spines, quiver in the toils of the serpents; hideous jaws crush skulls and fasten themselves on howling lips; with hair on end and their mouths open miserable beings tremble on the ground, wildly and furiously kicking in the midst of the heaps of humanity around them. A man, who thus handles the skeleton and muscles, puts rage, will, and terror into the fold of a thigh, the projection of a shoulder-blade, and the flexions of the vertebra; in his hands the whole human animal is impassioned, active, and combatant. What contemptible mannikins in comparison are the tame frescoes, the lifeless processions, allowed to remain beneath his! They subsist like the ancient marks on the quay of a river, by which one sees what torrents have arisen there and overflowed its banks. Alone, since the Greeks, he knew the full value of all the members. With him, as with them, the body lives by itself, and is not subordinated to the head. By dint of genius and solitary study, he rediscovered that sentiment of the nude with which their gymnastic life imbued them. Before his seated Eve, who turns half around with her foot bent under her thigh, you imagine involuntarily the spring of the leg which is to raise that noble form erect. Before his Eve and Adam expelled from Paradise nobody thinks of looking to the face to find grief; it is the entire torso, the active limbs, the human frame with the setting

of its internal parts, the solidity of its Herculean supports, the friction and play of its moving joints, the *ensemble,* in short, which strikes you. The head enters into it only as a portion of the whole; you stand motionless, absorbed in contemplating thighs that sustain such trunks and indomitable arms that are to subject the hostile earth.

But what to my taste surpass all, are the twenty youthful figures seated on the cornices at the four corners of each fresco, a veritable painted sculpture that gives one an idea of a superior and unknown world. These are all adolescent heroes of the time of Achilles and Ajax, as noble in race, but more ardent and of fiercer energy. Here are the grand nudities, the superb movements of the limbs, and the raging activity of Homer's conflicts, but with a more vigorous spirit and a more courageous, bold, and manly will. Nobody would suppose that the various attitudes of the human figure could affect the mind with such diverse emotions. The hips support, the breast respires, the entire covering of flesh strains and quivers; the trunk is thrown back over the thighs, and the shoulder, ridged with muscles, is going to raise the impetuous arm. One of them falls backward and draws his grand drapery over his thigh, whilst another, with his arm over his brow, seems to be parrying a blow. Others sit pensive, and meditating, with all their limbs relaxed. Several are running and springing across the cornice, or throwing themselves back and shouting. Three among them, above the 'Ezekiel' the 'Persica' and the 'Jeremiah,' are incomparable; and one especially, the noblest of all, as calm and intelligent as a god, gazes with his elbow resting on some fruit, and his hand resting on his knee. You feel that they are going to move and to act and that you would like to maintain them before you constantly in the same attitude. Nature has produced nothing like them; thus ought she to have fashioned us; here would she find all types: giants and heroes, alongside of

modest virgins and youths and sporting children; that charming Eve, so young and so proud; that beautiful Delphica, similar to a primitive nymph, who turns her eyes filled with innocent astonishment—all sons and daughters, of a colossal militant race, but to whom their century has preserved the smile, the serenity, the pure joyousness, the grace of the Oceanides of Æschylus, and of the Nausicaa of Homer. The soul of an artist contains within itself an entire world, and that of Michael Angelo is here unfolded.

He had given it expression, and he ought not to have reproduced it. His 'Last Judgment,' near by this, does not produce the same impression. The painter was then in his sixty-seventh year, and his inspiration was no longer as fresh. After having long brooded over his ideas he has a better hold of them, but they cease to excite him; he has exhausted the original sensation, the only true one, and he exaggerates and copies himself. Here he intentionally enlarges the body, and inflates the muscles; he is prodigal of foreshortenings and violent postures, converting his personages into well-fed athletes and wrestlers engaged in displaying their strength. The angels who bear away the cross clutch each other, throw themselves backward, clench their fists, strain their thighs, and gather up their feet as in a gymnasium. The saints toss about with the insignia of their martyrdom, as if each sought to attract attention to his strength and agility. Souls in purgatory, saved by cowl and rosary, are extravagant models that might serve for a school of anatomy. The artist had just entered on that period of life when sentiment vanishes before science, when the mind especially delights in overcoming difficulties. As it is, however, this work is unique; it is like a declamatory speech in the mouth of an old warrior, with a rattling drum accompaniment. Some of the figures and groups are worthy of his grandest efforts.

The powerful Eve, who maternally presses one of her horror-stricken daughters to her side; the aged and formidable Adam, an antediluvian Colossus, the root of the great tree of humanity; the bestial carnivorous demons; the figure among the damned that covers his face with his arm to avoid seeing the abyss into which he is plunging; that in the coils of a serpent rigid with horror, as if a stone statue; and especially that terrible Christ, like the Jupiter in Homer overthrowing the Trojans and their chariots on the plain; also, by his side, almost concealed under his arm, that timorous, shrinking young virgin, so noble and so delicate,—all form a group of conceptions equal to those of the ceiling. These animate the whole design. We cease to feel the abuse of art, the aim at effect, the domination of mannerism; we only see the disciple of Dante, the friend of Savonarola, the recluse feeding himself on the menaces of the Old Testament, the patriot, the stoic, the lover of justice who bears in his heart the grief of his people and who attends the funeral of Italian liberty, one who, amidst degraded characters and degenerate minds, alone survives and daily becomes sadder, passing nine years at this immense work, his soul filled with thoughts of the supreme Judge and listening beforehand to the thunders of the last day.

BOOK IV.

VILLAS, PALACES, AND CHURCHES.

CHAPTER I.

THE ITALIAN GRAND SEIGNEUR OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY—THE MANNERS OF THE PALACE AND THE ANTE-CHAMBER—THE VILLA ALBANI—THE VILLA BORGHÈSE.

NOTHING has interested me more in these Roman villas than their former masters. As naturalists are aware, one obtains a pretty good idea of an animal from his shell.

The place where I began to comprehend him is the Villa Albani, erected in the eighteenth century for Cardinal Alexander Albani, and according to his own plans. What you at once detect here is the *grand seigneur courtier,* after the fashion of our nobles of the seventeenth century. There are differences, but the two tastes are kindred. What they prize above all things is art and artistic order; nothing is left to nature; all is artificial. Water flows only in jets and in spray, and has no other bed but basins and urns. Grass-plots are enclosed within enormous box-hedges, higher than a man's head, and thick as walls, and are shaped in geometrical triangles, the points of which terminate in a centre. In front stretches a dense palisade lined with small cypresses. You ascend from one garden to another by broad stone steps, similar to those at Versailles. Flower-beds are enclosed in little

frames of box, and form designs resembling well-bordered carpets, regularly variegated with shades of colour. This villa is a fragment, the fossil skeleton of an organism that lived two hundred years, its chief pleasure being conversation, fine display, and the manners of the *salon* and ante-chamber. Man was not then interested in inanimate objects; he did not recognise in them a spirit and beauty of their own; he regarded them simply as an appendix to his own existence; they served as a background to the picture, and a vague one, of less than accessory importance. His attention was wholly absorbed by the picture itself, that is to say, by its human drama and intrigue. In order to divert some portion of attention to trees, water, and landscape, it was necessary to humanise them, to deprive them of their natural forms and tendencies, of their savage aspect, of a disorderly desert air, and to endow them as much as possible with the air of a *salon*, or a colonnade gallery, or a grand palatial court. The landscapes of Poussin and Claude Lorraine all bear this imprint. They are architectural constructions—the scenery is painted for courtiers who wished to reinstate the court on their own domain. It is curious, in this relation, to compare the island of Calypso in Homer with that of Fénelon. In Homer we have a veritable island, wild and rocky, where sea-birds build their nests and screech; in Fénelon a sort of Marly, 'arranged to please the eye.' Thus do the English gardens as now imported by us indicate the advent of another race, the reign of another taste and literature, the ascendency of another mind, more comprehensive, more solitary, more easily fatigued, and more devoted to the world within.

A second remark is this, that our *grand seigneur* is an *antiquary*. Besides two galleries, and a circular portico filled with antique statues, there are pieces of sculpture of every description scattered about the gardens: caryatides,

torsos, colossal busts, gods, columns topped with busts, urns, lions, huge vases, pedestals, and other innumerable remains, often broken or mutilated. In order to turn everything to account, a wall is frequently encrusted with quantities of shapeless fragments. Some of these sculptures, such as a caryatides, a mask of Antinous, and certain statues of emperors are fine; but the greater part forms a singular collection. Many of them belonged, evidently, to small municipalities and private dwellings; they are workshop stock, already familiar to the ancients, and the same as would subsist with us, if after a long period of inhumation our stairway statues and *hôtel de ville* busts should be discovered; they may be regarded as museum documents rather than as works of art. No house is thus decorated except through pedantry; *bric-à-brac* forms the taste of an old man, and is the last that subsisted in Italy. Literature being dead, there still existed dissertations on vases and coins; among gallant sonnets and academical phrases, when all intellectual effort was interdicted or paralysed in the grand void of the last century, the taste of former days and the curiosity of archæologists were still preserved, as in the times of Politian and Lorenzo de' Medici. This sort of employment diverts minds from serious questions; an absolute prince or a cardinal may well favour it, and thus occupy his leisure hours; he may assume the air of a connoisseur, or of a Macænas and merit dedicatory epistles, mythological frontispieces, and Latin and Italian superlatives.

A third point, no less visible, is this: our seigneur antiquary is *Italian*, a man of the south. This architecture is adapted to the climate. Many of our structures imitated during our classic centuries, and absurd under our skies, are reasonable here, and accordingly beautiful. First is the grand portico with open arcades; windows are unnecessary, and it is even better to be without them; it is a

promenade, and especially one in which to enjoy fresh breezes. It is proper, too, to have everything of marble; in the north we would feel cold through the imagination alone; we would involuntarily recur to curtains, rings, heaters, carpets, the entire apparatus indispensable to physical comfort. A duke, on the contrary, or a prelate in his purple robe, in state, and surrounded by his gentlemen, is just where he should be to discuss political affairs or to listen to the reading of sonnets. From time to time, on his majestic promenade, he may bestow a glance on statues and emperors' busts, and descant on them as a latinist and politician, earnestly interested in their lives and images, through a sort of relationship belonging to the right of succession. He is again well placed here to receive artists, patronise *débutants,* and to order and examine architectural plans. If he enters an avenue, it is so wide and smooth, that his robe is not likely to be caught, besides furnishing plenty of space for his train of attendants. The garden and buildings are admirable for an out-of-door levée.

The prospects and landscape vistas obtained at the ends of the galleries, thus framed in by columns, are of the same taste. The superb ilex rises above a terrace, with its monstrous pilasters and evergreen dome of monumental foliage. Avenues of sycamores diverge in rows shaped like porticoes. Lofty solemn cypresses clasp their knotty branches against their grey trunks and rise in the air gravely and monotonously like pyramids. The aloe stretches itself against a white wall, its strange trunk scaled and tortuous like a serpent writhing in convulsions. Beyond, outside the garden, on a neighbouring hill-side, a confused mass of structures and pines elevate themselves, rising and falling according to the surface of the ground. On the horizon runs the sharp broken line of the mountains, one of which, blue like a heavy rain

cloud, rises triangularly and shuts off a portion of the sky. From this the eye reverts back to the series of arcades forming the circular portico, to the balustrades and statues diversifying the crest of the roof, to columns scattered here and there, and to the squares and circles of the hedges and fish-pools. Surrounded by this mountain frame the landscape is precisely like that of Perelle, and it corresponds with an intellectual state of things, of which a modern man, and especially a northern man, has no idea. People nowadays are more delicate, less capable of relishing painting, and more capable of relishing music; men in those days had coarser nerves, and senses more alive to external objects; they did not feel the spirit of outward objects, but readily appreciated their forms. A well-selected and well-arranged landscape pleased them the same as a lofty and spacious apartment, solidly constructed, and handsomely decorated; this sufficed for them; they never held a conversation with a tree.

On the first story, and from the large marble balcony, the mountain in front seems like an edifice, a veritable piece of architecture. Below, you see ladies and visitors promenading the compartments of the alleys; give them brocade silk skirts, velvet coats, lace frills, and a nobler and easier deportment, and you would behold a court as it defiled before and lived indolently under the eye, and at the expense of a grand seignor. He needed it in order to impress others with his importance, also to protect himself from enemies; only in these days has man learned to live by himself, or alone with his family. The grand saloon, likewise, wainscotted and decorated with marble, adorned with columns, bas-reliefs, great vases, and gilded and painted in fresco, is the most beautifully arranged place for a reception: One can recompose without much effort of the imagination the entire scene

with all its personages. Here and there, awaiting the master, are amateurs and abbés discussing and examining the merits of pictures. Their eyes look upward at the 'Parnassus' of Mengs; they compare it with that of Raphael and thus furnish evidences of culture and good taste; they avoid dangerous converse and may depart without being compromised. Alongside, in small saloons, are others contemplating a superb bas-relief of Antinous —that breast so vigorous, those manly lips, that air of the valiant wrestler; and, farther on, an admirable pale Cardinal by Domenichino, and the two little bacchanals, so animated, by Giulio Romano. People still comprehend these; traditions are still maintained; new intellectual views—a rhetorical, philosophical culture—have not yet effaced, as in France, the manners, customs, and ideas of the sixteenth century; assassinations are still common, and the streets in the evening are by no means safe. Whilst, in France, the boudoir painters reign, Mengs is here imitating the Renaissance, and Winckelmann is reviving the antique. They appreciate their works and those of the great masters; patient attendance in ante-chambers, the emptiness of prudent conversation, the dangers of unreserved gaiety and a mutual distrust have augmented sensibility while hindering its expansion. There is still a place in man for strong impressions.

How remote these habits and sentiments from our own! How refined culture, widely diffused wealth, and an effective police have laboured amongst us to leave of man no master intellect but that of the Bohemian, the nervous ambitious being of Musset and of Heine!

I prolonged my walk two miles beyond this. There are quantities of grand villas decked with ridiculous ruins expressly manufactured for them, and many duly modernised; opposite styles contend with each other; it is not worth one's trouble to enter these villas.

Other structures, more commonplace, afford glimpses of groves of palms, and of the cactus and white rushes scattered about among flowing fountains—nothing can be more graceful and original. The poorest inns contain in their courts large spreading trees, or thick trellises overhead forming roofs of verdure. You drink bad wine, yellow and sweet, but your eyes dwell on landscapes of delicate tints, bordered with the long blue mountains, budding verdure, white almond trees, elegant outlines of brown and grey foliage, and a sky flecked with soft vapoury clouds.

Villa Borghèse.—I have not much to say to you of the other villas: they suggest similar ideas; the same way of living produced the same tastes. Some of them are grander, more rural, and on a larger scale, and among them is the Villa Borghèse. You reach it through the Piazzo del Popolo. This square, with its churches, obelisks, and fountains, and the monumental steps of the Pincio, is both peculiar and beautiful.

I am always mentally comparing these monuments with those of Paris, to which I am accustomed. You find here less space and stonework, less material grandeur than in the Place de la Concorde and in the Arc de Triomphe: but more invention, and more to interest you.

The Villa Borghèse is a vast park four miles in circumference, with buildings of all kinds scattered over it. At the entrance is an Egyptian portico, in the poorest possible taste—some modern importation. The interior is more harmonious, and quite classical. Here is a little temple, there a peristyle, further on a ruined colonnade, a portico, balustrades, large round vases, and a sort of amphitheatre. The undulating surface rises and falls in beautiful meadows, red with the delicate trembling anemone. Italian pines, purposely separated, display their elegant forms and stately heads in profile against the white sky;

fountains murmur at every turn of the avenues, and in small valleys grand old oaks, still naked, send up their valiant, heroic, antique forms. I was born and nurtured in the north; you can imagine how the sight of these trees dissipated all the beauties of Rome; how its churches and structures vanished before these gnarled old trunks, the mighty combatants of my cherished forests, now reviving under the moist winds, and already putting forth their buds. They refresh one delightfully in this world of monuments and stone. All that is human is limited, and on this account wearies; lines of buildings are always rigid; a statue or picture is never aught but a spectre of the past; the sole objects that afford unalloyed pleasure are nature's objects, forming and transforming, which live, and the substance of which is, so to say, fluid. You remain here entire afternoons contemplating the ilex, the vague, bluish tint of its verdure, its rich rotundity, as ample as that of the trees of England; there is an aristocracy here as there; only can grand hereditary estates save beautiful useless trees from the axe. By the side of these rise the pines, erect like columns, bearing aloft their noble canopies in the tranquil azure; the eye never wearies in following those round masses, commingling and receding in the distance, in watching the gentle tremor of their leaves and the graceful inclination of so many noble heads, dispersed here and there through the transparent atmosphere. At intervals, a poplar, ruddy with blossoms, sends up its vacillating pyramid. The sun is slowly declining; gleams of ruddy light illumine the grey trunks, and the green slopes are sprinkled with blooming daisies. The sun sinks lower and lower, and the palace windows flash, and the heads of statues are lit up with mysterious flames, while from the distance one catches the faint music of Bellini's airs borne along at intervals by the swelling breeze.

CHAPTER II.

THE VILLA LUDOVISI—STATUES—THE AURORA OF GUERCINO—LANDSCAPES—NEPOTISM IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY—THE DECADENCE OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY—THE PALACE AT THE PRESENT DAY.

ALL these villas have their collections of antiques. That of the villa Ludovisi is one of the finest; a pavilion has been expressly erected to contain it. Since the days of Lorenzo de' Medici the possession of antiquities here has been a compulsory luxury, a complement of every great aristocratic life. Accordingly, on regarding things closely, you perceive throughout the history of modern Rome a souvenir, a continuation as it were of antique Rome; the Pope is a sort of spiritual Cæsar, and, in many points, the people who live beyond the Alps are always barbarians. We have been able only to renew the chain of tradition; with them this chain has never been broken. I have notes on all this gallery; but I will not overwhelm you with notes. . . . .

There is a head of 'Juno, Queen,' possessing a grandeur and seriousness altogether sublime. I do not believe that there is anything superior to it in Rome.

I noticed a seated 'Mars,' with his hands crossed on his knees, and a nude 'Mercury.' But I cannot repeat what I have already written you on this sculpture; what you feel for the twentieth time is the serenity of a beautiful, complete existence, well-balanced, in which the brain is not an oppressor of the rest of the body. In vain you admire Michael Angelo, and heartily give him your sympathy as to a mighty heroic tragedy; you say to yourself re-

peatedly that this wonderful calmness is more beautiful, because it is healthier. The torso of this Mercury scarcely shows any modelling—you simply see the line of the pelvis; instead of muscles in activity the sculptor has represented only the human form, and that suffices for the spectator.

A modern group, by Bernini, called 'Pluto bearing off Proserpine,' affords a striking contrast. The head of Pluto is vulgarly gay; his crown and beard give him a ridiculous air, while the muscles are strongly marked and the figure *poses*. It is not a true divinity, but a decorative god, like those at Versailles—a mythological *figurant* striving to catch the attention of connoisseurs and the king. Proserpine's body is very effeminate, very pretty, and very contorted; but there is too much expression in the face; its eyes, its tears, and its little mouth are too attractive.

The weather was perfectly beautiful, the sky of a cloudless blue, and the more charming that for the last eight days we had no rain and no mud; but an effort was necessary in order to see anything, so depressed was I by the death of our poor friend Wœpke.

The villa, however, is charming; its fields, intact and refreshed by the rains, sparkled; the blooming laurel hedge, the oak forests and the avenues of old cypress trees cheered and revived one's spirit with their grace and grandeur. This kind of landscape is unique; you find the vegetation of all climates mingled and grouped together; on one side are knots of palms, and the grand feathery cane shooting up like a wax-taper from its nest of glittering leaves; beyond, a poplar and enormous grey naked chestnut trees, just beginning to blossom. And a still more peculiar sight is the old walls of Rome, a veritable natural ruin, that serves as an enclosure. Hot-houses are supported against red arcades; lemon trees in pale rows hug the disjointed bricks, and in the vicinity fresh green grass is growing

abundantly; from time to time you detect from some elevation the outermost circle of the horizon and the blue mountains varied by snow. All this exists within Rome. Nobody comes here, and I do not even know if anyone lives here. Rome is a museum and a sepulchre where past forms of life subsist in silence.

You reach the large central pavilion and enter a hall wainscotted with mosaics, where grand busts look gravely down on you from their lofty niches. The name of the founder of this villa, Cardinal Ludovisi, is inscribed over each door. Through the windows you perceive gardens and verdure. The 'Aurora' of Guercino fills the ceiling and its curves. This is the vast naked dining-hall of a grand seigneur; we have halls nowadays as brilliant and as convenient, but have we any as beautiful? Aurora, on a chariot, quits old Tithonus half enveloped in drapery, which a Cupid raises, whilst another, nude and plump, seizes with infantile playfulness some flowers in a basket. She is a young vigorous woman, her vigour almost inclining to coarseness. Before her are three female figures on a cloud, all large and ample, and much more original and natural than those of the Aurora of Guido. Still farther in advance are three laughing young girls frolicking and extinguishing the stars. A ray of morning light half traverses their faces, and the contrast between the illuminated and shadowed portions is charming. Amid ruddy clouds and the morning mists that are disappearing, you perceive the deep blue of the sea.

On one of the hollows of the arch is a seated female figure, sleeping, clad in grey, and supporting her head with her hand; near her is a naked infant couched on some white drapery, also asleep. This sleep is of admirable truthfulness; the profound stupor characteristic of children in this state is strongly marked in the slight pout of the lips and in a light frown on the brow. Guercino did not,

like Guido, copy antiques; he studied living models, like Caravaggio, always observing the details of actual life, the changes of impression from grave to gay, and all that is capricious in the passion and expression of the face. His figures are often heavy and short, but they live; the mingling of light with transparent shadows on the bodies of the two sleepers is the very poetry of sleep.

The Palace.—These villas and gardens, and these palaces that fill the Corso, are the remains of Rome's grand old aristocratic life. Neither Paris nor London possesses anything like them; private parks in these cities have become public promenades; a great family has retained only a mansion, or more frequently an ordinary house, with a small plot of ground around it, on which its master may take his walks, subject to the gaze of his neighbours. Whilst in northern lands equality was being established, the aristocracy were here strengthening themselves and renewing their existence through nepotism. For three centuries the popes employed the best part of the public revenues in the founding of families; they were good relatives, and provided well for the children of their brothers and sisters. Sixtus V. gave to one of his grand nephews a cardinal's hat and a hundred thousand crowns out of the ecclesiastical benefices. Clement VIII. in thirteen years, distributes among his nephews, the Aldobrandini, and in ready cash only a million of crowns. Paul V. bestows on Cardinal Borghèse one hundred and fifty thousand crowns of the Church income; on Marc-Antoine Borghèse a principality, several palaces in Rome, the most beautiful in its vicinity; and to others, diamonds, plate, carriages, and complete sets of furniture, amounting to a million of crowns in specie. With such profuse supplies the Borghèse family purchased eighty estates, all on the Roman Campagna, besides others elsewhere. The truth is, the Pope is simply an aged functionary, whose office is

but a life tenure, his family being obliged to make the most of it in the shortest space of time. These prodigalities increase under every successive reign. Under Gregory XV., Cardinal Ludovisi receives two hundred thousand crowns of benefices; his uncle, the Pope's father, is treated as handsomely. The pope founds *luoghi di monte* for eight hundred thousand crowns, which he gives to them. 'The possessions of the Peretti, the Aldobrandini, the Borghèse, and the Ludovisi,' says a contemporary, 'with their principalities, their enormous revenues, so many magnificent edifices, such superb furniture, decorations, and rare pleasure-grounds, surpass not only the state of nobles and princes not sovereign, but approach that of kings themselves.' Under Urban VIII. the Barberini receive to the amount of one hundred and five million crowns, and things go so far, that the Pope entertains scruples and appoints a commission to take the matter in hand. In short, in order to provide the means for these liberal endowments, it becomes necessary to borrow money, and the finances get to be in a dreadful plight; at the end of the sixteenth century, the interest of the debt amounted to three quarters of the revenue, and six years later it absorbed it entirely, excepting seventy thousand crowns; a few years after this, certain branches of the revenue no longer sufficed to discharge the burdens imposed on them. The commission nevertheless declared that the Pope, as prince, might bestow his savings and all surplus income on whom he pleased. Nobody then considered a sovereign as a magistrate entrusted with the administration of the public funds; such an idea did not prevail in Europe until after the time of Locke, the state being regarded as property which anyone might either use or abuse. The commission declared that the Pope could conscientiously found a majorat for his family at eighty thousand crowns. When a little later Alexander VII. wished to heal this

sore, good strong arguments were advanced to him to prove that he was wrong. He had forbidden his nephews to come to Rome, and the rector of the Jesuits' College, Oliva, decided that he ought to summon them there 'under penalty of committing mortal sin.' It is interesting to see in contemporary narratives* how money flows and overflows, descending from pope to pope in new reservoirs and in magnificent golden streams, their glittering waves sparkling with the precious effigies of sequins, crowns, and ducats. The reader sees, as in the vicinity of a vivifying water-course, the most beautiful aristocratic flowers spring up; all that sumptuousness represented in pictures and in engravings, gentlemen in satin and velvet, gay lackeys, footmen, guards, and corpulent majordomos, officers of the kitchen, the table, and the stable; a population of men-at-arms and noble domestics purposely selected for show and expense, forming a retinue for the master on his visits, adorning his antichamber at his receptions, mounting behind his carriage, lodging in his attics, eating in his kitchen, assisting at his bedside, and living in lordly style, with nothing to do but to make their embroidered coats last as long as possible and defend at all hazards the honour of their master's house.

How support such a throng of people? And note this, that they had to be supported; they were necessary in order to ensure their patron proper respect. Rome was not a place of security; 'On the death of Urban VIII.,' says one of his contemporaries, 'society, during the conclave, seemed to have disintegrated. There were so many armed people in the city, I do not remember ever to have seen so many. There is no wealthy house that does not provide itself with a garrison of soldiers. If all were massed together they would form a grand army. Violent

* See Ranke's History of the Popes.

acts, and all kind of license are committed with impunity; men are slain in all quarters: the report the oftenest circulated is that this or that well-known person has just been killed.' As soon as the pope is elected, his predecessor's nephews have a busy time; every effort is made to force them to disgorge their plunder, their enemies commencing trials at once, and often compelling them to fly. Amidst so much danger, a party of dependants and clients whose swords are always ready and faithful, becomes an imperative necessity. Rome had not then taken the step which separates the middle ages from modern times. Security and justice did not exist. She is not an organised state, and still less a soil of patriotic sentiment; every one is obliged to protect himself either by force or by stratagem; every one enjoys privileges, that is to say, the power and the right in certain circumstances to set himself above the law. Even a hundred years later, De Brosses writes, 'whoever cares to disturb society may do so with impunity provided he is known to a noble, and is within reach of a place of refuge. . . . . Places of refuge abound everywhere, the churches, the enclosure of an ambassador's quarter, the house of a cardinal, to such an extent, that the poor devils of *sbirri* (these are archers) belonging to the police, are compelled to carry maps of the particular streets and places in Rome through which they may pass in pursuit of a malefactor.'

A noble lives in his palace, like the feudal baron in his castle. His windows are cross-barred and strongly bolted, so as to resist lever and axe; the stones of his façade are long, half the length of a man's body, so that neither bullet nor pick can affect their mass; the walls of his gardens are thirty feet high, and the copings and corner stones are such that few would risk an attack on them. The park, again, is large enough to hold a small

army; two or three hundred men in slashed doublets easily find room in the antichambers and galleries, and all can be lodged without difficulty under the roof. As to recruits, these are never wanting. As in the middle ages, the feeble, in order to exist, are forced to commend themselves to the strong. 'My lord,' says a poor man, 'like my father and my grandfather, I am the servant of your family.' Also, as in the middle ages, the strong, to sustain themselves, require to enlist a corps of the weak. 'There is a coat, and so many crowns a month,' says the powerful man, 'march by the side of my carriage on entries and at ceremonies.' There are thus at Rome hundreds of petty leagues, and the more men a man has under his control and in his service, the stronger he is.

Such a system brings ruin, and the first thing is to borrow. In this respect the nobles imitate the state, or, in order to obtain ready money they mortgage their revenues, and fail to keep their engagements. For seven years the creditors of the Farnese do not receive a crown; and as among these creditors there are hospitals and charitable establishments, the pope is compelled to dispatch soldiers to occupy the Farnese territory at Castro. In these days, moreover, disputes grow out of breaches of etiquette, and provoke veritable wars, and you may imagine the expense of these. The Barberini, having received no visit from Odoardo Farnese, deprive him of the right of exporting his corn, whereupon the latter invades the States of the Church with a body of three thousand horse, declaring that he does not come to attack the pope but only his nephews. The nephews in their turn raise an army; the soldiers on both sides are mercenaries, French and German, and the country is pillaged by the two cavalcades until, finally, peace is effected, and both parties find themselves with empty pockets. In order to refill them the natural course is to oppress the

people. Donna Olympia, sister-in-law of Innocent X., sells public offices. The brother of Alexander VI., chief judge at Borgo, makes a market of justice. Taxes become frightful. A contemporary writes 'that the people, without revenue, clothes, beds, and kitchen utensils to satisfy the requirements of the commissaries, have only one resource left with which to pay taxes, and that is to sell themselves as slaves.' They cease to work and the country becomes impoverished. In the following century De Brosses writes, 'The government is as bad as one could possibly conceive of. Imagine what a people must be of whom one third are priests, and another third idlers; where there is neither agriculture, commerce, nor manufactures, in the midst of a fertile country, and on a navigable river, and in which at every change fresh robbers come to take the place of those who no longer need to plunder.'

In such a country labour is a delusion. Why should I take the trouble to work, knowing that the exchequer or some noble, or some protected knave, will rob me of the fruits of my labour? It is much better to attend the levee of a *valet-de-chambre* of some dignitary; he will obtain for me a slice of the cake. 'If a common girl enjoys protection through the bastard of a cardinal's apothecary, she has secured to her five or six dowries charged on five or six churches, and no longer desires to learn how to sew or to spin; another scoundrel espouses her through the attraction of this ready money,' and they live by sponging; later as panders, solicitors, and beggars they fish for their dinner wherever they can find it. High life then begins, such as the *picaresco* novels portray it, and not merely in Rome but throughout Italy. Labour is regarded as an indignity, and people aim at display; they hire servants and forget to pay them their wages; they dine on a turnip and wear lace; they obtain credit of the

merchants and repel their demands with lies and entreaties. Goldoni's comedies are full of these well-born personages, clever and cultivated and living at the expense of others. They get themselves invited into the country; they are always gay, dashing, and conversational, poetic in honour of their host and advisory in all his building enterprises; above all they borrow his money and do full justice to his table, being called 'cavaliers of the tooth;' buffoons, flatterers, and gluttons, they would readily accept a kick for a crown. The memoirs of the day furnish hundreds of examples of this degeneracy. Carlo Gozzi, on returning home from his travels with a friend, stops a moment to contemplate the superb façade of the palace of his family. They ascend a broad marble staircase and are astonished at what they behold, the house seeming to have been given up to pillage. 'The floor of the great hall was entirely destroyed. There were deep cavities everywhere, over which one stumbled with a severe shock; the broken windows let the wind in from all quarters, and the soiled tapestry hung on the walls in shreds. Not a trace was left of a magnificent gallery of old paintings; I could find but two portraits of my ancestors, one by Titian and the other by Tintoretto.' The women pawn, hire, or sell, what they can and how they can. When necessity prompts them they no longer stop to reason. One day the sister-in-law of Gozzi sells to a sausage-maker by weight a bundle of old papers consisting of contracts, trust-deeds, and titles to property. All these circumstances provide the expedients, intrigues, and humorous features of the *Roman comique*. It is only necessary to read that scapegrace Casanova, in order to know to what gilded misery can descend. He undoubtedly, like all rogues, kept the company of his equals; but French rascality has with him a different air and quite other actors than Italian. He accosts a count, an officer of the Venetian Republic, an amiable man,

whose wife and daughter are refined both in manners and in address; on the following day he visits them, and finds the window blinds almost closed; he opens them slightly and perceives two poor women dressed in rags and in linen by no means attractive; they hire fine clothes for Sunday in order to attend mass, without which they would obtain no share of the ecclesiastical alms that enable them to keep body and soul together. Some few years after this he returns to Milan. Husbands and brothers, all gentlemen and well bred and many quite proud, play the part of panders in their own families; a count with whom he lodges, and who is without fuel to make a fire, blushingly offers to negociate the honour of his wife. Another, Count Rinaldi, on learning that his daughter brings a hundred crowns instead of fifty weeps for joy. Charming women who, for lack of money, could not visit Milan, are unable to resist a supper and a dress. The son of a noble Venetian keeps a gambling-hell, cheats at play and confesses it. A young lady of the nobility confesses that 'her father taught her to cut the cards at faro so as never to lose.' Men and women go down on their knees before a sequin. Quotations are impossible; the actual words of the swindling charlatan adventurer can alone make visible the extraordinary contrast between morals and manners; on the one hand fine clothes, polished phrases, elegant style, and the taste and deportment of the best society; and on the other the effrontery, the acts, the gestures, and the filth of the vilest. It is to this low level that the seigneurial life of the sixteenth century descended. When the people no longer work, and the great rob, we see *chevaliers d'industrie* and female adventurers in swarms; honour is an article of merchandise like other things, and it is bartered for coin when naught else remains.

And yet it is to this society of the idle and the privileged

that we owe the great works of art which now attract visitors to Rome. In the absence of all other interests men occupied themselves with forming galleries and with architecture; the pleasure of building and the tastes of the antiquary and connoisseur were all that remained to a nobleman weary of ceremonies in a country where the chase and violent bodily exercises were no longer in fashion, where politics was interdicted, where neither public spirit nor humanitarian sympathy existed, and where a noble literature had become extinct, having been supplanted by the grossest ignorance and insignificant verses. What could he do after he had provided for the interests of his house, returned his visits, and made love? He builds and he buys. Until the eighteenth century, and in full decadence, this noble tradition subsists. He prefers beauty to convenience. 'The houses,' says President De Brosses, 'are covered with antique bas-reliefs from top to bottom, but there is not a bedroom in them.' The Italian is not ostentatious, like the Frenchman, in his receptions and in gormandising; in his eyes a fine fluted column is worth more than fifty repasts. 'His mode of self-display, after having acquired a fortune by a life of frugality, is to expend it in the construction of some grand public edifice . . . . in order to transmit to posterity in a durable manner his name, his magnificence, and his taste.'

The traces of this peculiar life are visible at every step in the hundred and fifty palaces that crowd Rome. You see immense courts, high walls like prison walls, and monumental façades. Nobody is in the court—it is a desert; sometimes at its entrance are a dozen loungers seated on the stones, appearing to be pulling up the grass; you would imagine the palace abandoned. This is frequently the case, its ruined master lodging in the fourth story and trying to let a portion of the rest, all these buildings being too grand, too disproportionate to the standard

of modern living, and unfit for anything but museums and ministerial purposes. You ring and a 'Swiss,' some solemn-visaged lackey, slowly answers the bell; these people all look like the doleful birds of the Jardin des Plantes, begilded, striped, befeathered, and sad, but roosting on a suitable perch. Very often nobody comes, although you are there at the proper day and hour, because the *custode* is executing some commission for the princess: and thereupon the visitor curses a country in which all support themselves on strangers, and in which nobody is prompt. You mount countless flights of steps, of extraordinary width and height, and find yourself in a range of apartments of still greater width and height; you advance —there is no end to them; you walk for five minutes before reaching the dining hall, in which four regiments of infantry with their sappers and musicians might all be lodged; the Austrian embassy at Venice is as much lost in one of these palaces as a nest of rats in an old mill.— Suppose, for instance, that you have a visit to pay; in vain does the family occupy the palace—it seems to be empty. You notice a few servants in the antichamber; beyond this solitude begins—five or six enormous halls, filled with faded furniture, most of it in the fashion of the Empire. You cast your eyes out of a window as you pass, and see lofty heavy walls, moss-covered pavements, and the cornices of a mutilated and leprous roof. At length human figures reappear—one or two officers; they announce you, and you stand before a plain-looking man in a frock-coat seated in a modern fauteil in a smaller chamber, and duly arranged with a view to comfort and warmth. If there is a melancholy abode in the world, one more discordant with modern usages it is that which this man occupies. By way of contrast remark, on leaving it, a renovated *hotel* such as you encounter among the lesser nobility,—the house of an artist, of which there are a

number near the Piazza di Spagna, with its carpets and flower-stands, its fresh new and elegant furniture, the many charming evidences of prosperity, its moderate and convenient dimensions, everything it contains that is attractive, brilliant, comfortable, and delightful. On the contrary, the palace requires sixty liveried lackeys and eighty dependent gentlemen on wages; these constitute the natural furniture for each apartment: the courts require the twenty carriages and the hundred horses of its ancient masters; add to this various services of plate, tapestries, and millions of cash in hand to regild or renew its furniture as in the days of the popes of two centuries ago. Its pictures, all those grand figures in action, those splendid nudities hung on the walls, are nothing now but monuments of an extinct existence, too voluptuous and too corporeal for the life of the present. A lizard quartered in the carcase of an antediluvian crocodile, his ancestor, is a symbol of the aristocratic life of Rome; the crocodile was a fine one, but he is now dead.

CHAPTER III.

THE FARNESE PALACE—THE SCIARRA, DORIA, BORGHESE, BARBERINI, AND ROSPIGLIOSI PALACES AND GALLERIES—THE PAINTERS OF THE SIXTEENTH AND SEVENTEENTH CENTURIES.

Of all these fossils the grandest, noblest, most imposing and rigidly magnificent is, in my opinion, the Farnese palace. It is situated in a vile quarter. In order to reach it you pass near the gloomy and dilapidated Cenci palace. Five minutes before I had traversed the Ghetto of the Jews, a veritable nest of pariahs in a labyrinth of crooked streets and foul gutters, its houses with their dislocated bulging fronts reminding one of dropsical hernia, their dark courts discharging exhalations, and their winding stone steps clinging to walls reeking with the filth of centuries. Ugly, dwarfed, and pallid figures swarmed here like mushrooms growing on a heap of rubbish.

You arrive, your mind filled with images of this description. Alone, in the middle of a dark square, rises the enormous palace, lofty and massive, like a fortress capable of giving and receiving the heaviest ordinance. It belongs to the grand era; its architects, San. Gallo, Michael Angelo and Vignolles, and especially the first named, have stamped upon it the veritable Renaissance character, that of virile energy. It is indeed akin to the torsoes of Michael Angelo; you feel in it the inspiration of the great pagan epoch, the age of tragic passions and

of unimpaired energies that foreign dominion and the catholic restoration were about to weaken and degrade. The exterior is a colossal square form, with strong barred windows, and almost wholly without ornament; it has to resist attack, endure for centuries, and lodge a prince and a small army of retainers; this is the first idea of its master and of its architect; that of the pleasing comes afterward. But the term pleasing is badly chosen; amidst bold and dangerous customs, amusement, and graceful amiability as we comprehend it, are never thought of; what they prize is grave masculine beauty, and they express it by lines and by constructions as well as by frescoes and statues. Above this grand, almost bare façade, the cornice that forms the edge of the roof is both rich and severe, and its continuous framework, so noble and appropriate, maintains the entire mass together, so that the whole is a single form. The enormous bossages of the angles, the variety of the long lines of windows, the thickness of the walls, constantly mingle together the ideas of force and beauty. You enter through a sombre vestibule, as solid as a postern, peopled with arabesques and supported by twelve short Doric columns of red granite. The admirable interior court here presents itself, and the finest portion of the edifice. The exterior is for defence, the interior for promenade, repose, and to enjoy the cool air. Each story has its own inner promenade and portico of columns, every column being inserted in a strong arch and forming a resisting echinus, which adds considerably to its energetic appearance; the balustrades however, and the diversity of the stories, one being Doric and another Ionic, and especially the garland of fruits and flowers separating them, and the lilies sculptured in arabesque, overspread this severity with beauty like a bright light in the midst of a powerful shadow.

The Sciarra and Doria Palaces.—As the former king of

Naples occupies the Farnese palace it is difficult to get access to it in order to examine the paintings; the others are open on fixed days. Proprietors have the taste and good sense to convert their private galleries into public museums. Hand-cards are placed upon the tables and serve as catologues for the convenience of visitors, while the *concierges* and keepers gravely pocket their two pauls' gratuity; they are, in fact, functionaries that serve the public and must be paid by the public.—This shows the transition from aristocratic to democratic life; master-pieces and palaces have ceased with us to be the property of individuals, in order to become the usufruct of all.

The Sciarra Palace.—Two precious pictures here are under glass, the first and the most beautiful being the 'Violin-player' by Raphael. This represents a young man in a black cap and green mantle with a fur collar, and thick brown hair descending over it. There is good reason for pronouncing Raphael the prince of painters. It is impossible to be more sober and more simple, to comprehend grandeur more naturally and with less of effort. His faded frescoes and defaced ceilings do not fully represent him; one must see works like this in which the colouring is not impaired and the relief remains intact. The young man slowly turns his head, fixing his eye on the spectator. The nobleness and calmness of the head are incomparable, also its gentleness and intelligence; you cannot imagine a more beautiful, a more delicate spirit, one more worthy of being loved. His seriousness is such that one might imagine he detected a shade of melancholy; but the truth is he is in repose and he has a noble nature. The more one contemplates Raphael the more does one recognise that he had a tender confiding soul, similar to that of Mozart, that of a man of genius who displayed his genius without suffering, and ever dwelt with ideal forms;

he remained good, like a superior creature traversing the baseness and miseries of life without being affected by them.

The other picture is a portrait of Titian's mistress, noble also and calm like a Greek statue; one hand rests on a casket and the other touches the magnificent hair which falls from her neck. The white chemise lies in careless folds, and a large red mantle encircles the shoulders. What folly to compare together these two painters and these two pictures! Is it not better to enjoy in them both aspects of life.

Two 'Magdalens' by Guido. Here you make comparisons in spite of yourself; you turn away immediately from these chalky, feeble productions, executed mechanically and barren of all ideas.

One of the masterpieces of this gallery, and perhaps the greatest, I find to be the 'Modesty and Vanity' of Leonardo da Vinci. It is simply two female figures on a dark background. Here, and as if by contrast, what there is of ideas is incredible. This man is the most profound, the most thoughtful of painters; his was a subtle intellect full of curious questionings, caprices, refinements, intricacies, sublime conceptions, and perhaps of sad experiences beyond all his contemporaries. He was universal—painter, sculptor, architect, machinist, engineer; anticipating modern science and defining and pursuing its method anterior to Bacon; inventive in all things, even to appearing eccentric to the men of his age; diving into and pressing onward through coming centuries and ideas, without confining himself to any one art or occupation, or contenting himself with what he knew or had done, but on the contrary dissatisfied at the very time when the self-love of the most ambitious would have been most gratified, always preoccupied in outstripping himself and in advancing on his own discoveries, like a navigator, who

indifferent to success and oblivious of the possible, plunges irresistibly into the infinite and unknown. The expression of the face representing Vanity is extraordinary. We can never know the research, the combinations, the sensations, the internal spontaneous reflective labour, the ground traversed by his spirit and intellect in order to evolve a head like this. She is much more delicately formed and more noble and elegant than Monna Lisa. The luxuriance and taste of the coiffure are remarkable. Beautiful clusters of curls tower above the head and reflect hyacinthine hues, while waving tresses descend upon the shoulders. The face is almost fleshless; the features on which expression depends absorb it entirely. She has a strange melancholy smile, one peculiar to Da Vinci, combining the sadness and irony of a superior nature; a queen, a goddess, an adored mistress possessing all and finding that all but little, would thus smile.

The landscape saloon is one of the richest; it contains several Claude Lorraines, some Locatellis, and a vast landscape by Poussin, representing St. Matthew writing near a large sheet of water in a country composed of broad monumental features—ever the same Italian landscape as understood in this country, that is to say, the villa magnified, just as the English garden is a transcript in miniature of the open country of England. The two races, the German and the Latin, show here their opposition; one loves nature for itself, while the other accepts it only as decoration in order to appropriate it and subordinate it to man. The finest picture here is a large landscape by Poussin representing a winding river, a forest on the left, in the foreground a ruined colonnade with a tower in the middle distance, and beyond a range of blue mountains. These parts are thus arranged architecturally, and the masses of colour, like the forms, are simple, powerful, quiet, and well contrasted. This gravity, this

regularity, satisfies the mind if not the eyes; in order fully to appreciate it, however, one must love tragedy, classic verse, the pomp of etiquette, and seigneurial or monarchical grandeur. The distance between these and modern sentiments is infinite. Who would recognise the life of nature here as we comprehend it, such as our poets portray it—undulating and subject to caprices, by turns delicate, strange, and powerful, expressive in itself and as varied as man's physiognomy?—Just as the Sciarra palace is dilapidated so is the Doria palace magnificent. Among the Roman families that of the Doria is one of the richest; there are eight hundred pictures in the various apartments. You pass through a long series of rooms covered with them, and then enter the gallery, a superb square promenade, extending around a court filled with verdant plants and painted in fresco and decorated with large mirrors. Three of its sides are filled with pictures, and the fourth with statues. Here and there are family busts and portraits, that of Admiral Andre Doria the leading citizen and liberator of Genoa, and that of Donna Olympia, who governed the Church under Innocent X. Such a gallery on a reception day, illuminated and crowded with the rich costumes of officers, cardinals, ambassadors and others must afford a unique spectacle. I have seen in other places two or three of these grand entertainments. The staircases and vestibules are decked with the laurel and the orange, mingled with busts and statues; the animated flesh of the pictures glows magnificently in their golden frames on their dark backgrounds; long galleries and spacious saloons, thirty feet in height, allow groups to assemble and disperse with the utmost facility: flaming candelabra and lustrous chandeliers fill a vast space with light without dazzling the eye with its profusion; while half-shadows and middle-tints do not disappear, as in our small

drawing-rooms, beneath the crudity and uniformity of a white light. Each group has its own peculiar tint and lives in its own atmosphere: amongst silken hangings, between chaste marble statues, under the sombre reflections of bronzes the assembly swims in a sort of fluid, the softness and depth of which the eye delights in.

The landscapes of Poussin and of Gaspar Poussin, his pupil, almost fill an entire hall. They are the largest I ever saw, one of them being twenty feet long. By dint of regarding the skilfully composed details of the country before you, that dark foreground of large trees contrasting with the delicate tint of the distant mountain, and that broad opening of the sky, you succeed in abstracting yourself from your own age and in taking the position of the painter. If he does not feel the life of nature he feels its grandeur, and solemn gravity, and even its melancholy. He lived in solitude, in meditation, in an age of decline. Landscape perhaps may be but the last moment of painting, that which closes a grand epoch and adapted to wearied spirits. When man is still young in heart he is interested most in himself, nature being to him no more than an accompaniment. At least it is so in Italy; if landscape art is developed there it is towards the end, in the time of the Arcadians and of pastoral academies; it already fills the larger portion of the canvasses of Albano and it entirely absorbs those of Canealetti, the last of the Venetians. Zuccarelli, Tempesta, and Salvator are landscapists. On the contrary, in the time of Michael Angelo and even in that of Vasari, trees and structures were disdained, everything but the human figure being regarded as accessory.

There are several works here by Titian; a 'Holy Family,' in his early style; the superb corporeal type he is afterwards to develop in his mistresses here begins to

appear. Two portraits represent these; they are only healthy, good-looking women, one of whom, decked in pearls and with a small collar, being the most appetising of well-fed servant girls. A merry 'Magdalen,' fully exposing her breast, is simply an animal. A 'St. Agnes' is only a good little pouting girl, very childlike and quite free of any mystic sentiment. In his 'Sacrifice of Abraham' poor Isaac cries like a little boy with a cut finger. Titian, almost as much as Rubens, dares portray the temperament of man, the passions of flesh and blood, the low, unrestrained instincts—in short, the brutal life of the body; but he does not give it full rein; he maintains the rebellious flesh within the confines of harmonious form; voluptuousness with him is never unaccompanied with nobleness. Happiness with him is not the satisfaction of the senses, but besides this the gratification of poetic instincts; he does not descend to *kermesses* but delights in fêtes, and not those of rustics but of epicureans and of grand seigneurs. Instinct with such natures may be as strong, as intemperate as among the vulgar, but it is accompanied with another intellect, and is not gratified at so little cost; it does not demand turnips on a pewter dish but oranges on a salver of gold. You cannot imagine truer and healthier colour than that of his 'Three Ages of Man,' a more blooming and fresher form than this superb blonde woman, in a red robe with the sleeves of her white chemise gathered at the shoulders, exposing the solid whiteness of her lovely arms. The expression is calm and serious. We are no longer capable of painting the beauty which might provoke but does not provoke.

Several pictures of the Bolognese school are all of the same character. One, by Guercino, and very black, represents Herminia meeting Tancred wounded and in a swoon. The attendant is an academy head, and the

figure in a swoon is copied from life with a melodramatic aim.—The second picture is by Guido, a 'Madonna adoring the infant Jesus.' The Madonna is a pretty boarding-school miss; this picture already smacks of the devout affectation and other influences of the 'sacred-heart.'—The third is a *Pieta* by Annibal Carrache. His Christ, a handsome young fellow, has a head *distingué* and sentimental, such as would please a pretty woman. The little weeping cherubs point touchingly to the holes in the feet and try to raise the heavy arm. Pretty sentimental efforts like these suited the fashionable pietism of the seventeenth century—a religion adapted to mystic and worldly women.

But the most striking examples are, in my opinion, the portraits. One by Paul Veronese represents Lucrezia Borgia in black velvet, the breast slightly exposed, with bows of lace on the sleeves and corsage, a large and mature form, her hair combed back, her forehead low, and with a singular look out of the eyes, as she appeared at the time Bembo addressed to her the periods and protestations of his ceremonious letters.—Admiral Andrea Doria by Sebastian del Piombo is that of a superb statesman and warrior, with a commanding air and calm look, his large head appearing still larger through its ample grey beard. There is another head by Bronzino, that of Machiavelli, animated, humorous, and suggestive of a burlesque actor; you would call him a sly fellow, attentive to all that goes on around him, and in search of the comic. In Machiavelli the historian, philosopher, and statesman, conceal the comedian, and this comedian is coarse, licentious, often bitter, and at last desponding. His jesting after his torture is well-known, and his funereal gaiety during the plague. When one is too sad he must laugh in order not to weep. In the seventeenth century and in France he might perhaps have been a Molière.—Two portraits

attributed to Raphael, or in his manner, those of Bartolo and Baldo, are rough jolly fellows; he has seized the entire man without any omission, in the very centre of his being. Other painters by the side of Raphael lack equilibrium and are eccentric.—The masterpiece of all the portraits is that of Pope Innocent X. by Velasquez; on a red chair before a red curtain under a red hat and above a red mantle is a red face, that of a miserable fool and pedant; make a picture out of this which is never forgotten! One of my friends, on returning from Madrid, remarked that, by the side of Velasquez' great pictures all the others, however true and magnificent, seemed dead and academic.

The Borghese Palace.—If on turning the corner of a copse you were to see a fawn advancing its head and listening, you would admire the gracefully bending neck, and feel the supple, waving motion of the body, as it darted off at the first alarm to scamper away in the underwood; when a horse near you tries to jump, and gathers up his hind-quarters to spring, you feel the swelling of the muscles that throw him on his haunches, and you interest yourself sympathetically in the attitude and in the effort. You do not expect anything more; you do not require an additional moral idyl, a psychological intention such as Landseer seeks. Such is the spirit in which the pictures of the great Italian century must be considered; expression comes later, along with the Caracci. That which occupies men about the year 1500 is the human animal, and its accompaniment, a simple easy costume. Add to this the pompous superstition of the time, the need of saints for churches and of decoration for palaces. Out of these two sentiments the rest all flow; the second, again, has simply furnished the motive; the substance of art comes from the first. They were right; grief, joy, rage, pity, all the shades and varieties of passion visible to the inward eye, if I subordinate the body to them; if

muscles and drapery are only there to translate these, I employ forms and colours simply as means, and do that which I could better do with another art, as for example, poetry. I commit the same mistake as is made in music when a strain of the clarionette attempts to express the triumphant ruse of the young Horatius; the same error as in literature when with twenty-five lines of ink on white paper it attempts to convey an idea of the curve of a nose or a chin. I fall short of picturesque effect and only half attain to a literary effect; I am only half-painter, half-author.

This idea recurs to one constantly, for example, before the 'Madonnas' and the 'Venuses' of Andrea del Sarto—all pretty young girls related to each other; and before the 'Visitation' of Sebastian del Poimbo—which is a Visitation if you choose to call it so, but if properly named would be entitled, an erect young woman standing by the side of an old woman stooping. Two different men were embodied in the spectator of that day: the devotee, who, in commissioning a picture for a church believed he was gaining a hundred years' indulgence, and the man of action, whose head was filled with physical imagery and who delighted in the contemplation of healthy bodily activity and fine drapery.

The 'Sacred and Profane Love' by Titian is still another masterpiece of the same spirit. A beautiful woman dressed appears by the side of another naked, which is all, and enough. One, calm with noblest serenity, and the other white with the amber whiteness of living flesh between red and white drapery, the breasts slightly defined, and the head free from licentious vulgarity, gives an idea of love of the happiest kind. By their side is a sculptured fountain, and behind them a broad landscape of a blue tone with warm patches of earth intersected by the darks of sombre forests, and in the distance the sea;

two cavaliers are visible in the background, also a spire and a town. People loved the actual landscapes which they saw daily, and these were put into their pictures without much thought of their suitableness; everything is designed to please the eye, nothing to please the reasoning faculties. The eye passes from the simple tones of that ample and healthy flesh to the rich subdued tints of the landscape, as the ear passes from a melody to its accompaniment. Both are in harmony, and in going from one to the other you feel a pleasure that continues to be a pleasure of the same order. In his other picture of the 'Three Graces,' after contemplating the first with her beautiful calm countenance, the golden diadem sown with pearls extending up to the middle of her crisped locks, and those blonde tresses descending in silken waves on the neck down to her robe, you let the eye pass to the magnificent landscape of naked rocks made blue by distance and atmosphere, and the poesy of nature completes that of the body.

There are seventeen hundred pictures in this gallery. How speak of them? Enumerate all the museums of Italy, all beyond the mountains and those that have perished, and add to this that there is not a private house of any pretension which does not possess one or more old pictures. It is with Italian painting as with that Greek sculpture which formerly accumulated at Rome sixty thousand statues. Each of these arts corresponds to a peculiar epoch in the human mind; men thought then through colours and through forms.

One of these pictures remains in the mind—the 'Diana's Chase' by Domenichino. This represents naked and half-naked young girls, gay and somewhat vulgar, bathing, playing, and drawing the bow. One, lying on her back, displays a charmingly infantile arch expression. Another, having just shot an arrow, smiles

with the gaiety of a pretty village lass. A little thing about fifteen, with a solid hearty torso, is removing the last of her two sandals. All these young creatures are plump, alert, and pretty, somewhat *grisettish* in character, and accordingly with not much of the goddess about them. But what natural youthful faces and charms! Domenichino is an original earnest artist, and quite the opposite of Guido. Among the exigencies of fashion and the conventionalities of partisans he maintains his own sentiment and dares to adhere to it; he resorts to nature and interprets her his own way. His contemporaries punished him for it, for he lived unhappy and unknown.

The Barberini and Rospigliosi Palaces.—It is pleasant to follow up an idea. I went to see his other pictures, one of which in the Barberini palace represents Adam and Eve before the Creator after their fall. In this work the painter shows himself as conscientious as he is bungling. Adam with the air of a stupid domestic apologises for himself and pitifully points to Eve, who with a not less exaggerated concern for herself points to the serpent. 'It is not my fault she is to blame.' 'It is not my fault but his.' The artist evidently pursues the moral aspect of the subject, insisting on it with the scrupulous fidelity of a declining school of art. Raphael never descended to this point. Another sign of the time, one of ecclesiastical decency, is that Eve and Adam wear aprons of leaves. The body and head of the woman, however, and the cherubs bearing Jehovah are of the greatest beauty, and the painting is solid. Domenichino was a shoemaker's son, slow, painstaking, of a modest gentle nature, very ugly, unfortunate in love, poor, criticised, oppressed, wholly absorbed with himself and self-interrogating, and without always getting a response, like a plant which, incompletely developing in a bad atmosphere

and under frequent showers, produces among many abortive blossoms here and there a beautiful flower.

There is in the Rospigliosi palace another 'Eve' by him, this time plucking the apple. Eve is a beautiful figure, and there is no part of the picture that does not show careful study. But what an odd idea the display of that menagerie of animals around them, and that red paroquet on the tree of life! The tree has on it a hump, a sort of step by which Adam is mounting upward. On the other hand his 'Triumph of David,' by the side of this overflows with genius and naturalness. Nothing can be found more charming and animated than that group of females, playing on musical instruments; one especially, bending forward and extending her arms with a sistrum in her hands, with a blue tunic and the leg bare, is in an attitude of indescribable grace; the flesh seems to be impregnated with light. No pose of the human structure, so as to display every part of the fine animal to greater advantage, could possibly be given. The heads are youthful, and of true virginal grace and sincerity; they are creations. We see a man, with the true heart of a painter, one who felt the beautiful in and for itself, one who is seeking, creating, and wrestling with his conception and labouring with all his power to express it, and not a simple manufacturer of figures like Guido. 'He was never weary,' says his biographer, 'of attending large assemblies of people, in order to observe the attitudes and expressions by which innate sentiments are made manifest.' You remark throughout all his productions this effort at expression and sometimes too great, as, for instance, the irritated aspect of Saul, who is violently clutching his tunic. The painter aimed to show the jealousy of one who half-betrays and half-restrains himself. Painting, however, poorly renders complications and shades of sentiment; psychology is not its business.

This palace contains the celebrated frescoed ceiling by Guido called the 'Aurora.' The god of day is seated on his chariot surrounded by a choir of dancing Hours, preceded by the early morning Hour scattering flowers. The deep blue of the sea, still obscure, is charming. There is a joyousness, a complete pagan amplitude about these blooming goddesses, with their hands interlinked, and all dancing as if at an antique fête. In fact he copied the antique, the Niobe group, for instance, and in this way formed his style; the type once found he always repeated it, consulting, not nature, but the agreeableness of the effect on the spectator's mind. Accordingly his figures generally resemble those of fashion plates; for instance, the 'Andromeda' of the neighbouring apartment, which has no form or substance, and which, in fact, is not a living existence but only a combination of pleasing contours. Guido was an admired, fortunate, worldly artist, accommodating himself to the taste of the day, and pleasing the ladies. He declared that he had 'two hundred ways of making the eyes look up to heaven.' What he contributes to this trifling, gallant, already satiated society, flourishing with *sigisbes*, is a delicate effeminate expression unknown to the old masters —the physiognomies and conventional smiles of society. Veritable energy, the interior force of undisguised passion, had already disappeared in Italy; people no longer admired the true virgins, the primitive spirits, the simple peasants of Raphael, but the sentimental inmates of convents and parlours in the shape of highly cultivated young ladies. The bold free spirit of former times is gone; traces of republican familiarity no longer exist; people converse ceremoniously according to etiquette, using sound-titles and obsequious phrases; since the Spanish conquest they cease to address each other as brother or neighbour, but don the title of *monseigneur*. Tastes change as

natures change. Effeminate, fastidious people dislike simple and strong figures; they require conventional smoothness, sweet smiles, curiously intermingled tints, sentimental visages, the pleasing and far-fetched in everything; sometimes, and by the way of contrast, they admire the audacity of Caravaggio, the crudity and triviality of literal imitation, just as they accept a glass of brandy after twenty of sweetened orgeat. The contrast is apparent in the Barberini gallery on comparing two celebrated portraits, which, a hundred years apart, have been regarded affectionately and as models of beauty. The 'Fornarina' by Raphael is simply a body with a brunette head, a hardened look, an expression vulgarly joyous, strongly marked eyelids, the arms too large below the elbow, and the shoulders too suddenly falling, in short a common vigorous woman of the masses, similar to the baker girl who was Lord Byron's mistress, and who *thee'd* and *thou'd* him, and called him a *cane della Madonna.* Raphael certainly found nothing in this figure, but a human animal, healthy and of good parts, and furnishing him with useful suggestions of lines. The 'Cenci,' on the contrary, by Guido, is a pale, pretty, and delicate creature; her small chin, mincing mouth, and the curves of the face are pleasing; draped in white and her head surrounded with white she poses like a model to be studied. She is interesting and fragile; deprive her of the pallor due to her melancholy situation, and nothing remains but an amiable young lady, like the virgin of the 'Annunciation' in the Louvre before the Angel, and a pretty page. This is what the sonnet writers and ladies admire!

CHAPTER IV.

CHURCHES—CHARACTER OF THE CHURCHES OF ROME—THE PIETY OF THE MIDDLE AGES AND THE DECORATION OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY—STRASBOURG CATHEDRAL—TRANSFORMATION OF CATHOLICISM AFTER THE RENAISSANCE—THE GESU—THE JESUITICAL SPIRIT—TASTE OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

It seems that your friends accuse me of irreverence. One visits Rome then to admire everything, and to take no notice of the dirty beggars and garbage on the corners of the streets! As you please my worthy friends; I am going to give you greater offence. Admit that I am here in the wrong season, that I record hasty impressions, that I talk sacrilegiously prompted merely by curiosity and a love of history, and that I handle neither brush, graver, nor modelling stick—all of which is true; but let every instrument utter its own music, and do not exact from me a common, monotonous tune, transmitted from one bird-organ to another for the greater glorification of tradition. I could never admit, for instance, that the churches of Rome are Christian, and this pains me, for it will prove prejudicial to me. If there is any place on the earth where it is proper to experience compassion, compunction, veneration, the sublime and solemn sentiment of the infinite, of the *beyond*, it is here; unfortunately, one feels only sentiments of the opposite character. How often by contrast have I thought of our Gothic churches—of Rheims, Chartres, Paris, and especially Strasbourg! I had revisited Strasbourg three months before this, and

had passed an afternoon alone in its vast interior drowned in shadow. A strange light, a sort of dark flickering purple, died away in the impenetrable blackness. In the background the choir and apsis with their massive circle of round columns, the strong primitive half-Roman church, disappeared in night—an antique root buried in the ground, a trunk thick and indestructible, around which the entire Gothic vegetation had expanded and flourished. There were no chairs in the grand nave, and scarcely more than four or five of the devout knelt there or wandered about like spectres. No miserable housekeeping, no frippery of commonplace worship, no agitation of human insects, existed there to trouble the sanctity of solitude. The ample space between the pillars expanded dark beneath the vault, filled with dubious light and almost palpable shadows. Alone, above the black choir one luminous window detached itself, crowded with radiant figures as if a glimpse into paradise.

The choir was filled with priests, but from the entrance one could distinguish nothing, so deep was the gloom and so great the distance. There were no ornaments visible and no petty idols. Alone in the obscurity, amongst grand forms scarcely discernible, two chandeliers with their lighted tapers illuminated the two corners of the altar like two trembling spirits. Chants arose and fell at regular intervals like swinging censers. Occasionally the clear voices of children in the distant choir made one think of the melody of cherubs, and from time to time an ample modulation of the organ covered all sounds with its majestic harmony.

On advancing, Christian ideas invaded the mind with fresh power proportionately to every newly-disclosed aspect. When, on reaching the apsis, and the cold deserted crypt is seen in which the stone archbishop lies couched for eternity, like a Pharaoh on his sepulchre, and, leaving

the funereal vault you turn away, the western rose window bursts out above the vast obscurity of the near arches in its border of black and blue, with its embroideries of crimson and purple, its innumerable petals of amethyst and emerald, its mournful ardent splendour of mystic jewels flashing and sparkling in ruddy magnificence. Here is heaven, as disclosed in the evening dream of a spirit that loves and suffers. Beneath, like a silent northern forest, the pillars extend their colossal files. Deep shadows and the violent opposition of radiant daylight image the Christian life plunged into this melancholy world with glimpses of the world beyond, while on both sides, lost in the distance, the violet and crimson processions on the window-panes, the whole of sacred history, sparkle in revelations appropriate to the weak nature of man.

How these barbarians of the middle ages felt the contrast of lights and shadows! What Rembrandts there were among the masons who prepared these mysterious undulations of glimmer and gloom! How true it is that art is only expression, that above all one must have a soul, that a temple is not a heap of stones or a combination of forms, but at once and uniquely a religion which speaks! This cathedral throughout appeals to the eyes at the first glance, to the first comer, to a poor wood-chopper of the Vosges or of the Black Forest, half brutish, stupified and mechanical, whose thick envelope no reasoning could penetrate, but whose miserable life amidst the snows, and solitude in his hut, and dreams under pines lashed by storms, filled with sensations and instincts here aroused by every form and every hue. The symbol gives all at the first impression and makes all felt; it goes straight to the heart through the eyes, without requiring to traverse the reasoning intellect. A man has no need of culture to be affected

by this enormous aisle with its grave pillars regularly arranged and never weary in upholding this sublime vault; it suffices him to have wandered during the winter months through the gloomy forests of the mountains. There is a world here, an abridgement of the great world as Christianity conceives it; to crawl, to grope with both hands against damp walls in this obscure life, amongst vacillating uncertain gleams, amongst the buzzings and bitter whisperings of the human hive, and for consolation, to perceive here and there aloft in the air radiant figures, the mantle of azure, the divine eyes of a Virgin and child, the good Christ extending his benevolent hands, whilst a concert of clear silvery notes and triumphant hosannahs bear the soul away on their rolling chords and symphonies.

The *Gèsu,* March 15.—These are the souvenirs, and others similiar to them, which spoil for me or rather which explain to me the churches of Rome. They are almost all of the seventeenth century or of the end of the sixteenth, and bear the mark of the Catholic restoration following upon the council of Trent. Departing from this epoch, the religious sentiment becomes transformed; the Jesuits have the ascendency. They possess a taste, as they possess a theology and a political scheme; always a new conception of divine and human things produces a new mode of comprehending beauty; man speaks in his decorations, in his capitals, in his cupolas, often more clearly and always more sincerely than in his actions and in his writiugs.

In order to see this taste in full display it is necessary to visit the *Gèsu* near the plazza in Venice, the central monument of the society, built by Vignolles and Jacques della Porta in the last quarter of the sixteenth century. The grand pagan renaissance perpetuates itself here, but with modifications. The semi-circular arches, the cupola,

the pilasters, the pediments, all the great parts of architecture are, as in the renaissance itself, renewed from the antique; but the rest is a decoration, and turns into luxury and gewgaws. With the solidity of its foundation and the soundness of its forms, with the pompous majesty of its pilasters crowned with gilded capitals, its painted domes eddying with grand figures draped and half-naked, its paintings framed in with borderings of sculptured gold, its angels in relief springing over the edges of their brackets, this church resembles a magnificent banquet-hall, some regal *hotel de ville* decked out with all its silver and glass, its damask hangings, and curtains garnished with lace, in order to receive a monarch and do him the honours of a city. The cathedral of the middle ages suggested sublime and melancholy reveries, a sentiment of human misery, the vague divination of an ideal kingdom in which the passionate heart finds its consolation and its transports. The temple of the Catholic restoration inspires sentiments of submission, of admiration, or at least of deference to this personage so powerful, so long-established, and especially so accredited and so richly furnished, called the Church.

Out of all this imposing and dazzling decoration one idea issues in the shape of a proclamation: 'Ancient Rome reunited the universe in a single empire; I renew it and I succeed to her. What she has done for the body I will do for minds. Through my missions, my seminaries, my hierarchy, I will establish universally, eternally, and magnificently, the Church. This Church is not, as Protestants desire it, an assembly of awakened and independent spirits, each active and reasoning over his Bible and his conscience; nor, as the early Christians desired, an assembly of tender saddened souls, mystically united through ecstatic communion and the expectation of the kingdom of God; but an organisation of ordained

powers, a sacred institution subsisting through itself and sovereign over all minds. She is not a part of them, is not dependent on them, but has her source within herself. She is a kind of intermediary Deity, substituted for the Creator, and endowed with all his rights.'

Such an ambition has its own grandeur, and gives rise to powerful sentiments. Undoubtedly it has nothing in common with the inward life of the spirit, with the constant questioning of the Christian conscience occupied in self examination before a just God; but is wholly human, and resembles the zeal which a monk felt for his order, or a French subject of the seventeenth century for the monarchy; man feels himself comprehended in a vast durable institution which he prefers to himself, in which he forgets himself, for which he labours and to which he devotes himself. It was the passion of a Roman for Rome; the new Rome in fact is to antique Rome what one of its churches with its dome is to the Pantheon of Agrippa, that is to say, an altered overloaded copy; the same however at bottom, save this difference, that the government of the second Rome is spiritual and not temporal, and goes from soul to body and not from body to soul. In one as in the other the object is to regulate all human life according to a preconceived plan, to subject it to an absolute authority, outside of which all seems disorder and barbarism. Where one employed force the other employs skill, management, patience, and the calculations of diplomacy and of policy; but fundamentally the heart has not changed, and in respect to spiritual habits, nothing is more like a Roman senator than a Catholic priest.

It is at this point of view that one must place himself in order to comprehend the ecclesiastical edifices of this country. They glorify not Christianity but the Church. This new Catholicism rests upon numerous supports and all of them are solid.

On habit.—Man has a sheep-like intelligence; out of a hundred persons not three possess leisure or mind with which to shape for themselves an opinion on religious matters. The way is marked out; ninety-seven follow it: of the remaining three, two and a half having groped about fruitlessly, return wearied to the beaten track.

On the beautiful regularity and imposing exterior of the institution.—Since the Council of Trent ecclesiastical discipline has become more stringent; under the counter-blow of the Reformation they have provided for the education and decent deportment of the clergy.

On the pomp and prestige of the cult and of edifices; on the great works accomplished, missions, conversions; on the antiquity of the institution; and on all that which Chateaubriand has developed in his beautiful style.

On a superstitious imagination more or less great according to climate, very strong in southern countries, and terrible at the hour of death.—A man of warm blood, with highly coloured, passionate conceptions, is possessed through the eyes. I have seen many who believed themselves rationalists and Voltaireans; a funeral ceremony, the sight of a Madonna in her glittering shrine amidst the flashing of tapers and clouds of incense, put them beside themselves, and brought them to the ground on their knees.

On repressive utility.—Governments, people of established position, proprietors and conservatives, find in it additional police security, that of the moral order of things.

On the portion of virtue developed in it. — Certain noble souls are born into it, or, through natural delicacy, recover the poesy of mystic tradition, like Eugenie de Guerin.

These are only general demarcations; there are other traits more special added by the Jesuits, and which are

peculiar to the order; you advance twenty paces in this church and they are at once perceptible. In these delicate, ingenious hands religion becomes worldly, and strives to please; she decks her temple like a saloon, and even overdecks it; it might be said that she displays her wealth; she tries to please the eyes, to dazzle them, to pique wearied attention, to appear gallant and smart. The little rotundas on the two sides of the great nave are charming marble cabinets, cool, and dimly lighted, like the boudoirs and bathing rooms of pretty women. Precious marble columns raise their polished shafts on all sides, or are entwined with tints of orange, rose, and verd-antique. A tapestry of marble covers the walls with its motley hues; pretty angels, in white marble, spring about over the cornices and display their elegant legs. Multiplied gildings run amongst the capitals, flash around the paintings, spread themselves in halos over the altars, crawl along the balustrades in luminous threads, mount upward in the sanctuaries in laboured bouquets of prodigal efflorescence, giving the air of a fête, and suggesting a princely gallery arranged for a ball. Amidst these glimmering golden reflections, among these incrustations of coloured marbles, through an atmosphere still fragant with incense, one sees grand groups of white marble in motion, proclaiming the new spirit of orthodoxy and obedience, *Religion striking Heresy to the ground, and the Church overwhelming false teachers.* On the left, behind a bronze balustrade, rises the throne of the patron saint of the place, the grand altar of St. Ignatius, crowded with pretty gilded cherubs playing in frames of agate, so adorned and embellished as to be unequalled, except by the scaffolding of figures, flambeaux, foliage, and gilding overhead, forming a pile as confused as the garniture of a

royal chimney, or that of a reposoir.* Here, in the hand of the Eternal is the celebrated orb of lapis-lazuli, the largest piece known in the world, and the silver statue of St. Ignatius, nine feet high. A priest, sweeping in the inclosure, raises the carpet in order to show me the marble incrustations; he passes his hand complacently over the lustrous agates, and mournfully alludes to the golden flambeaux carried off during the wars of the Revolution; he is very glad to be attached to such a beautiful altar, much preferring it to that of the choir, which he regards as too simple. He entreats me to return on the following day in order to see with my own eyes the silver statue nine feet high; to-day it is under cover; 'It is all silver, monsieur, and nine feet high! There is nothing like it in the world!' The peasant, the labourer of the seventeenth century, timidly uncovered himself on entering the house of so rich a personage. The gentleman, the dandy, found kindred society amidst furniture as pompous and as flashy as his own. Besides, he encountered ladies in rich attire, and listened to excellent music.

All this forms part of a system. You become sensible of it on overrunning southern countries. It was already familiar to me in Belgium, on the good, peaceable, docile soil recovered by the Duke of Parma; in the Jesuits' church at Antwerp; in the inner decoration of almost all the old cathedrals; in that famous pulpit of St. Gudule, a veritable garden, on which is sculptured foliage, trellises, leaves, a peacock, an eagle, all kinds of beasts, the entire menagerie of Eden, Adam and Eve decently clothed, and the would-be angry angel, but nevertheless smiling. All jesuitical objects thus wear a smiling, concocted aspect, awakening ideas of convenience and pleasure: above the head of the preacher, for example, is a celestial bed of

* An altar erected for ceremonies in the open air.

clouds similar to an alcove, and, still higher, the Madonna, in the shape of a tall graceful young lady with pretty dainty arms, ready for a ball. The commentary on this system of decoration is the *Imago primi sæculi*, a splendid illustrated work, which serves as the manifest of jesuitic taste. In this the Jesuit appears as nurse rocking the divine doll, or again as the Jesuit fisherman hauling up souls in a net, while underneath its designs are Latin and French verses in true collegiate style, nice little conceits, precious wordplay, intellectual recreations, and sweet nothings; in brief, all the sugar plums of devout confectionery.

If they have manufactured sugar plums it is with genius. The proof is that they have reconquered the half of Europe, and if they have been successful, it is owing to their having discovered one of the leading ideas of their age. Catholicism at this time had to wheel about in order to save itself, and it was through them that the manœuvre was accomplished. After the universal glorious renaissance, in the midst of the industrial pursuits and the arts, and the new sciences which sheltered, embellished, and expanded human life, the ascetic religion of the middle ages could no longer subsist. The world could no longer be regarded as a dungeon, man as a worm, and nature as a temporary fragile veil, miserably interposed between God and the soul, with only glimpses here and there through its rents of a supernatural sphere alone substantial and subsistent. People began to rely on human force, and on reason; they began to realise the stability of natural laws, to enjoy the partial protection arising from the establishment of regular monarchies, and to relish greedily the prosperity flowing in upon them from all sides. Health and energy had revived, and stout muscles, a well-balanced brain, the warm ruddy glow of life coursing through the veins repelled the fever

of mysticism, the gloomy visions, the agonies and ecstatic transports due to a spare diet and over-excitement of the nervous system. Religion was compelled to accommodate herself to man's new condition; she was forced to become more moderate, to withdraw or modify her maledictions of this earthly sphere, to authorise or tolerate natural instincts, to accept openly or indirectly the expansion of a temporal life, and no longer to condemn the taste for, and the quest of comfort and wealth. She conformed to the times, and north as well as south, amongst Germans as well as amongst Latins, Christianity could be seen insensibly approaching this world. The Protestant honoured free institutions, useful labour, a solemn marriage, family life, the honest accumulation of wealth, the modest enjoyment of domestic happiness and bodily comfort. 'Our business,' says Addison; 'is to be easy here, and happy hereafter.' The Jesuit modified the formidable doctrine of grace; he explained away the rigid prescriptions of councils and of the Fathers of the Church; he invented peculiar indulgences, an easy system of morality, an accommodating casuistry, convenient devotional duties, and, through an adroit management of distinctions, restrictions, interpretations, probabilities, and other theological briars, succeeded with his supple hands in setting man free in the realm of pleasure. 'Amuse yourself, keep young and see me occasionally, and tell me what you are doing. Rely upon it I will show you many favours.'

But in letting one rein go slack another had to be tightened. Against unruly instincts, only half-restrained, the Protestant erected a barrier in the shape of a tender conscience, an appeal to reason, and an orderly laborious activity. The Jesuit sought one in a methodical and mechanical control of the imagination. This is his great stroke of genius. He discovered in human nature

a deep unknown stratum, the support of all the rest, and which, once inclined, communicated its inclination to all the others, so that henceforth everything moves along the orb it thus formed. The spring within us is not reason nor reasoning, but imagery. Sensuous appearances once introduced into our brains they shape and repeat themselves, and take root there along with involuntary affinities and adhesions, so that afterwards, when we act, it is in the sense of, and through the impulsion of forces thus produced; our will wholly springs up, like growing vegetation, from invisible seeds, which an internal fermentation causes to germinate without our assistance. Whoever is master of the obscure cavern in which this operation takes place is master of the man; all he has to do is to sow the seed, direct the subterranean growth, and the adult plant becomes whatever he chooses to make it. It is necessary to read their *Exercitia Spiritualia* in order to know how, without poetry, without philosophy, without employing any of the noble impulses of religion, man is got possession of. They have a prescription for rendering people devout; they make use of it in their retreats, and its effect is certain.

'The first point,' say these clever psychologists,* 'is to construct an imaginary place, that is to say, to figure to oneself the synagogues, the hamlets, and the towns which Christ visited on his mission. . . . . Represent to yourself as if in a vision of the imagination, a material locality, for example, a temple or a mountain, on which you observe Jesus Christ or the Virgin Mary, and other objects relating to meditation. . . . . The second point is to understand interiorly what all these personages say; for example, the divine personages conversing together in heaven on the redemption of the human race, or rather the Virgin and the angel in a small apartment treating

* Edition of 1644, pp. 62, 80, 96, 120, 104, 106.

together of the mystery of the Incarnation. . . . . If an incorporeal object forms the substance of our meditation, as, for instance, the consideration of sin, a place may be constructed by the imagination in such a way as to enable us to contemplate our soul enchained in a prison, in this corruptible body, and man himself an exile in the valley of tears among senseless brutes.' Likewise, in order seriously to feel the condition of the Christian, it is well to conceive two armies, Christ with the saints and angels in a vast field near Jerusalem, and Lucifer, 'chief of the impious, in another field near Babylon, on a seat of raging fire and smoke, horrible in his aspect, and with a terrible countenance. After this, it is important to place before your eyes this same Lucifer invoking innumerable demons and despatching them to do all possible injury to the universe, without exempting from their attacks any city, any place, or any class of persons.' Every turn of the wheel is labelled. If it concerns hell, 'the first point is to contemplate through the imagination the vast conflagrations of that region, and the souls surrounded by material fire as in a dungeon. The second is to hear through the imagination the plaints, the sobs, the yells, bursting forth against Christ and the saints. The third is to inhale through the imagination the smoke, sulphur, and stench of a sink of filth and corruption. The fourth is to taste through the imagination the most bitter things, like tears, sourness, and the gnawing worm of conscience. The fifth is to touch these fires, the contact with which consumes souls.' Every cog of the wheel grinds at every revolution; first come the images of sight, then of hearing, then of smell, then of taste, and then of touch; the repetition and persistency of the shock deepen the impression. One must thus labour at this five hours a day. No diversion is permitted in the intervals of repose. Nobody is to be seen in the world outside. All conversation

with the brethren within is interdicted. They must carefully abstain from reading or writing anything irrelevant to the day's meditations, and at night they again resume. Based upon experience, this treatment produces its effect in five weeks. In my opinion, this is too long. I know of many who, subjected to such a system, would experience hallucinations, in a fortnight, and to the ardent imagination of women, children, or shattered and saddened brains, ten days is ample. Thus beaten and hammered in, the imprint remains indestructible. Let the torrent of passion or of worldly joys flow as it will, at the end of twenty or thirty years, in periods of anguish and on the approach of death, the profound impression over which it will have vainly flowed always reappears.

CHAPTER V.

SANTA MARIA DEL POPOLO—THE CAPUCHIN CONVENT—SANTA MARIA DEGLI ANGELI—THE CARTHUSIAN CONVENT—RELICS—SANTA MARIA DELLA VITTORIA—ST. THERESA BY BERNINI—DEVOTION AND LOVE IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY—THE QUIRINAL GARDENS.

March 18.—We have to-day visited five or six churches; their architecture is often too pretentious, too affected and even extravagant, but never vulgar.

The first is Santa Maria del Popolo, a church of the fifteenth century, modernised by Bernini, but still impressive. Wide arcades in rows separate the great nave from the lesser ones, and the effect of these bold curves is grave and grand. So many tombs produce a tragical impression; the church is crowded with them; twenty cardinals have their monuments here. Their statues repose on stone; other effigies dream or pray half reclining; frequently a bust only is seen, and sometimes a death's head above a monumental tablet bearing an inscription; several sepulchres lie beneath the pavement, and the feet of the faithful have worn off the relief of the figures on the stones that cover them. Death is present and palpable everywhere; under the funereal slab you feel that there are bones, the miserable remains of a man, and that those cold motionless marble forms reposing eternally in a corner of the chapel, with uplifted meagre fingers, are all that subsists of the warm palpitating life, which consumed itself in its own flame before the world to leave

nothing but this heap of ashes. Our French churches have not this funereal pomp. In this marble cemetery, among these magnificences and menaces, before these chapels as brilliant as agate and decked with crossbones, before these statues of imposing saints and these bronze skulls inlaid and glittering in the stone, one is bewildered and afraid. Our popular theatres catch the people with rich decoration and murderous dénouements.

This process is still more apparent among the Capuchins of the Plazza Barberini. As we reached this square we encountered a passing funeral procession. Behind marched a file of monks in white, bearing tapers, their black eyes, the only signs of animation about them, gleaming beneath their cowls. After these a second file followed, composed of Capuchins with grey beards and white heads, rolling the beads of their rosaries in their fingers and chanting doleful psalmody. We see similar characters at the opera, and they excite laughter. Here the solemnity of death is overwhelming.

We entered their convent, which is quite mediocre. The long arcade within is tapestried with bad portraits of monks, bearing inscriptions in verse on death, and very edifying, that is to say, terrifying. It is painful to see these poor creatures, almost all of ripe age, without family or friends, uselessly devoting their lives to self-extinction. On the walls hang printed notices prescribing the prayers and stations of holy week that secure plenary indulgence, also the duties of lesser efficacy by which ten years of indulgence are gained for other parties and therefore transferable. What can an ordinary monk think of here but of laying up a store of pardons? It is capital for him; if he has friends, a nephew or a god-child, or an old dead father, he can present them with his surplus. He is simply anxious to employ his time advantageously, to select the most productive chapels, to execute as many

genuflexions and recitations as possible. If he is a good manager, and perseveres, he will redeem five or six souls besides his own. The great Saint Liguori, the most accredited theologian of the last century, held to this principle: a zealous Christian is almost sure of avoiding hell; but as no one is exempt from sin, it is almost certain that nobody will escape purgatory; accordingly, if a man is wise, he will daily add to his capital stock of indulgences. Suppose that he gains a hundred days to-day—and he can do this with a single prayer—he will get out of purgatory just three months and ten days earlier.

For lack of other outlets, and through poverty, the peasantry have to furnish recruits, and, once becoming monks, hoard up indulgences, as a rustic lays up crowns; such an occupation befits their condition, education, and intelligence. Besides this, they go outside their convent, and for a few sous attend at funerals. As the order has preserved somewhat of its ancient popular spirit, they visit respectable women and recommend curatives; they teach prayers and make presents of amulets, and, moreover, offer pinches of snuff, and furnish the recipe for a certain kind of salad.—There are about four thousand monks in Rome.*

We went through the church and saw several pictures by Guido: a charming 'St. Michael,' with bare legs and bootees, an amiable brilliant military page, with the head of an *amoroso*; by its side, and by way of contrast, is a 'St. Francis,' by Domenichino, a wasted, haggard figure. In another building is the cell of a celebrated monk; an altar is placed here, to which the Pope comes to say mass. All these traces of mediæval asceticism, this infantile and barbarian devotion, this mode of exalting and

* Stato delle Anime dell' alma citta di Roma, 1863; in all 6494 ecclesiastics.

debasing man, is distressing. The monk that conducted us about the convent is almost a fool, a miserable idiot; he utters profound sighs, and always repeats himself in a shattered voice, and with a vacant stare. *Intende poco,* exclaims the monk that replaces him.

The latter led us into a subterranean chapel, containing a horrible and extraordinary pile of mummies. Five years in the ground of this cemetery suffice to dry up a body; no other preparation is necessary, and the body is then displayed with the rest. Four chambers are filled with these skeletons, arranged in groups in a decorative manner. Thigh-bones, shoulder-blades, arms, and the pelvis are fashioned into bouquets, garlands, and elegant tapestry. A singular taste and ingenuity have regulated the disposition of this furniture: sometimes a skull is suspended at the end of a chain of vertebræ, which descends from the ceiling, and forms a lamp; again, a couple of arms spread out their joints and knotty fingers in the guise of pendants above a mantel-piece: hollow thigh bones are arranged one above another like rows of pitchers upon a handsome buffet; while along the wall, and over the arch, the radius runs in complicated designs and pretty capricious arabesques; here and there in a corner numerous thoracic cages bristle with white stories of ribs and clavicles. The soil consists of ranges of graves, some full, and others awaiting their occupants. The recent dead lie in their cowls, one of whom the monk pointed out as his friend, deceased in 1858; he was a very large man, but the cemetery has so attenuated and reduced him that his yellow skin clings to his rigid arms and face, and the flesh seems to have melted away. Our monk added that two of the brethren are now quite ill, and that one would probably die that night, and he designated the grave already prepared for him. This poor man in his grey beard and old swimming eyes, narrated all this

quite merrily, laughing as he spoke; it is impossible to describe the effect of such gaiety in such a place, and on such a subject. Each monk, remember, resorts to this chapel daily to pray; imagine the physical gripe of such machinery on a man, and how it must shape and distort him!

We required a change of air, and went to Santa Maria degli Angeli, near by. It was once the library of the Baths of Diocletian. The Romans came here after bathing to converse, and to pass away the hot hours of the day. Michael Angelo converted it into a church, and under Benedict XIV., Vanvitelli remodelled the entire edifice. For a reading-room or promenade one cannot imagine a graver, more airy, and more suitable place. It was admirable for thought; the magnificent gigantic columns still remaining are worthy to support the noble span and ample rotundity of the enormous vault above! Always does the same impression recur to you at Rome, that of a Christianity badly veneered on ancient paganism.

An honest grey-headed Carthusian led the way to a fresco by Domenichino in the choir. This vast painting represents the martyrdom of St. Sebastian, and is very beautiful;—but look at its effect. The artist evidently intended to portray a collection of attitudes; you see a man on horseback, several executioners bending forward and backward, another on his knees selecting arrows, a woman resting entirely on one leg, as if about to run, and another kneeling almost under a horse's feet, all of which personages are going to come in collision. Above, are angels supporting a crown, soaring and seeming to swim along as if they delighted in displaying their limbs. The flesh is animated; some portions of the bodies remind you of the Venetian style; besides this there are several females with most expressive physiognomies, and, throughout, a kind of joyousness and a lustre diffused over the agitated,

struggling mass of figures, floating draperies, and beautiful, luminous flesh. The total effect is that of a grand, rich, studied, successful sentiment of bravery. This painting, so worldly, is an accompaniment of the Jesuit restoration.

The cloister of the Carthusians, behind this, was designed by Michael Angelo. In my opinion few objects in the world are so grand and so simple; simplicity, especially, so rare in Roman edifices, produces a unique impression, and one you do not forget. A vast court, square and solitary, suddenly discloses itself, framed in by white columns supporting an arcade of small arches. Overhead the pale red of the tiles gaily glows. There is nothing more; on each side for a hundred and thirty paces the elegant curves of arches rise and fall to meet their slender shafts, which seem never to be weary of repeating themselves. A fountain issues from the centre, and flows between four cypresses, twelve feet in circumference: these rustle eternally with a charming sonorous murmur, bringing to the lips a line of Theocritus:

The babbling cypresses are content with thy hymeneal.

Their murmur is a genuine song, and beneath them as gently as they the water sings in its basin of stone. One never wearies in contemplating these grey old trunks, their bark scored century after century by the superabundant sap, and ascending abruptly in clusters of branches straightened and closely pressed against their sides. This black pyramid, of a strong healthy colour, stirs incessantly and rises aloft in the light, intersecting the clear azure of the sky. The court, planted with lettuce, artichokes, and strawberries, smiles with its early verdure, while at long intervals, under the arcades, appear the long white robes of Carthusians, silently passing.

In order to complete our pleasure our good monk insisted on showing us the treasures of the convent, that is to say, the relics deposited in the chapel. This is a sort of crypt; they light little wax torches, and apply the burning end close to the glass sashes. At the first glance you would imagine yourself in a museum; every piece is labelled, and there are pieces of every part of the body. Some of the skeletons are complete, and you see cartilages, and portions of the skin underneath the bandages. In one sash, under the altar, is a mummy of Saint Liber; in front is an infant, found, with its father and mother, in the catacombs. Nothing is lost in Rome. Here the darkest devotion of the dark ages still exists, just as it prevailed in the eleventh century, when King Kanute, on visiting Italy, purchased the arm of St. Augustine for a hundred talents in gold. It began with the invasion of the barbarians, and lasted till the time of Luther. From this period, under Pius V., Paul IV., and Sixtus V., another religion, purified and learned, arose; one which through seminaries, discipline, and restored canons, formed the priest as we now know him, such as the learned and noble Catholicism of France in the seventeenth century exhibited him, that is to say, regular in conduct, correct and decent in deportment, watched and watching himself, a sort of moral prefect or sub-prefect, the functionary of a grand intellectual administration aiding laic governments, and maintaining order in minds generally. The difference is enormous between the belligerent, epicurean, and pagan popes of the beginning of the sixteenth century, and the devout, pious, and ecclesiastical popes of the end of it; between Leo X., a *bon-vivant*, ardent huntsman, and amateur of coarse farces, surrounded by buffoons, and passionately fond of antique fables, and Sixtus V., once a Franciscan monk, who demolished the Septizonium of Septimus Severus, who

transported an obelisk to the square of St. Peter's in order to make it Christian,* and who wished to purge Rome of every trace of ancient paganism.

We returned to Santa Maria della Vittoria in order to see the 'St. Theresa' of Bernini. She is adorable. In a swoon of ecstatic happiness lies the saint, with pendant hands, naked feet, and half-closed eyes, fallen in transports of blissful love. Her features are emaciated, but how noble! This is the true, high-born woman, 'wasted by fire and tears,' awaiting her beloved. Even to the folds of the drapery, even to the languor of her drooping hands, even to the sigh that dies on her half-closed lips, nothing is there in or about this form that does not express the voluptuous ardour and divine enthusiasm of transport. Words cannot render the sentiment of this affecting rapturous attitude. Fallen backward in a swoon her whole being dissolves; the moment of agony has come, and she gasps; this is her last sigh, the emotion is too powerful. Meanwhile an angel arrives, a graceful, amiable young page of fourteen, in a light tunic open in front below the breast, and as pretty a page as could be despatched to render an over-fond vassal happy. A semi-complacent half-mischievous smile dimples the fresh glowing cheeks; the golden dart he holds indicates the exquisite, and at the same time terrible shock he is about to inflict on the lovely impassioned form before him. Nobody has ever executed a tenderer and more seductive romance. This Bernini, who in St. Peter's seemed to me so ridiculous, here conforms to the modern standard of sculpture, wholly based on expression; and to complete the effect he has arranged the light in a way to throw over the pale delicate countenance an illumination seeming to be that of an inward flame, as if, through

* See the inscription in which he boasts of his triumph over false gods.

the transfigured palpitating marble, one saw the spirit glowing like a lamp, flooded with rapture and felicity.

The commentary on such a group is to be found in contemporary mystic treatises, like the famous 'Guida Spirituali' of Molinos, a work reprinted twelve times in twenty years, and which in indolent Rome circulated from palace to palace, directing souls along the intricate pathways of a new spirituality up to a point of love without a lover, and then beyond.* Whilst exalted Spain consumed itself with its Catholicism like a taper in its own flame, and, through its poets and painters, prolonged the feverish excitement with which St. Ignatius and St. Theresa burned, sensual Italy, stripping off the thorns of devotion, breathed it as a full-blown rose, and, in the pretty saints of its Guido, in the seductive Magdalens of its Guercino, and in the graceful rotundities and glowing carnality of the later masters, accommodated religion to the voluptuous softness characteristic of its sonnets and society. 'There are six degrees of contemplation,' said Molinos, 'and these are: fire, unction, exaltation, illumination, taste, and repose. . . . Unction is a sweet spiritual fluid which, in circulating through the soul, instructs and fortifies it. . . . Taste is a savoury relish of the divine presence. . . . Repose is a pleasing, wonderful state of tranquillity in which so great is the felicity and power of peace that the soul seems to have sunk into a gentle sleep, as if she were abandoned to, and rested on, the loving divine bosom. . . .' There are many degrees of contemplation beside these, such as ecstacy, transports, melting, swooning, triumph, kissing, embraces, exaltation, union, transformation, betrothal, marriage.† He professed all this

* See Articles 41 and 42 in his interrogatory: 'In such cases, and others which otherwise would be culpable, there is no sin, because there is no consent.'

† Guida Spirituali.

and put it into practice. In this corrupt, enfeebled society, where the mind, unoccupied with serious things, devoted itself wholly to intrigues and ostentation, the passionate and imaginative part of it could find no outlet but in sentimental and gallant conversation. From terrestrial love, when remorse came, they passed over to celestial love, and, in the natural course of things with such a doctrine, experience showed them that between the lover and the director nothing was changed.

I have lately read the 'Adone' of Marini; in this poem, the most popular of this age, one sees more clearly than elsewhere the great transformation of sentiments, manners, and arts which already appeared in the Armida and Aminta of Tasso. What a contrast, on recurring to the tragic Leda of Michael Angelo! How graceful and effeminate everything has become! How rapid the descent to the level of dainty insipidity! How readily is the standard of *sigisbes* accepted! This poem of twenty cantos seems to have been composed expressly for some fine youth to lisp in the ears of an indolent lady, under the colonnade of a marble villa, on warm summer evenings, with rustling jets of water murmuring around them, and in an atmosphere of the perfume of flowers made languid by the heat of the day. Its theme is love, and, for ten thousand lines, it discourses of nothing else. Magnificent gallant fêtes and allegorical gardens, the engaging and inexhaustible story of love's adventures, blend together in their brains like the too powerful odours of innumerable roses amassed around them in their copses and bouquets. The heart is drowned in the universal sea of voluptuousness. What better can they do, and what remains for them to do? Virile energy has disappeared; under the petty tyranny which interdicts all activity of mind and body, man has become effeminate; he no longer has any will, and only thinks of enjoying himself. At a woman's

knees he forgets everything else; a flowing, trailing robe is all that his imagination requires. His reward is the loss of all manliness and nobleness. Because love is his sole aspiration, he no longer knows how to love; he is at once whining and gross, incapable of anything but licentious description or mawkish devotion; he is a mere closet gallant and a boudoir domestic. Degenerate sentiment is accompanied with degenerate expression. He spins out his ideas and loads them with affectations; he abounds in exaggeration and *concetti*, and thus fashions for himself a jargon with which he prattles. As a climax to all this he is hypocritical; he places a learned explanation at the head of the most venturesome cantos, in order to prove his indecencies moral, and to disarm ecclesiastical censure, of which he stands in fear. Profane love or sacred love, all falls to the same level with this century, and in Bernini, as in Marini, a mannered immodest grace shows the debasement of man when excluded from healthy activity and reduced to a worship of the senses.

We finished the day in the Quirinal gardens arranged by a pope of this period, Urban VIII. They are situated on a hill and descend in terraces to the bottom of its declivity. We seemed to be promenading through one of Perelle's landscapes; tall hedges, cypresses shaped like vases, and flower-beds bordered with box, form various designs, colonnades, and statues. This garden has the cold, formal, grave precision of the century, such as with the establishment of stable monarchies and a decent administration was diffused throughout the arts of Europe. At this epoch the church, like royalty, is an uncontested power, and displays itself to the eyes of its subjects in a dignified, grave, and proper manner.

But these gardens, thus understood, are much better adapted to Italy than to France. These sculptured hedges of laurel and of box endure the winter, while

in summer they afford protection from the sun. The ilex that never loses its verdure provides a dense shade at all times, and walls of perennial shrubbery arrest the winds. The fountains everywhere constantly flowing attract the eye, and preserve the freshness of the avenues. From the balustrades you have a view of the entire city, including St. Peter's and the Janiculum, with its waving, sinuous line in the glow of the evening sky. For a pope and ecclesiastical dignitaries, all aged, and who promenade in their robes, these formal alleys and this monumental decoration are most appropriate. In the spring it is pleasant to pass an hour here in the warm sunshine, under the grand arcade of the crystal firmament above the pathways; and then to descend the broad steps, or the gentle declivities, to the central basin in which fifty jets of water spring from its borders and mingle their blue streams together. Near by is a rotunda filled with mosaics, offering the shade and coolness of its vault. These sounds, this agitated water, these statuettes, this grand horizon in front of this summer saloon, furnish so many distractions to the mind, and give the wearied spirit rest. One day a group is added, and on another day a clump of trees is renewed or planted; the pleasure of building is the only one left to a prince, and especially to an aged one wearied and worn with ceremony.

CHAPTER VI.

PROMENADES — SANTA MARIA MAGGIORE — SAN GIOVANNI — SCENERY — THE STREETS OF ROME — SANTA MARIA IN TRASTEVERE — SAN CLEMENTE—SAN FRANCISCO A RIPA.

March 20.—My friends urge me to be more indifferent, to enjoy things as they are, to care nothing about their origin, and to let history alone. To-day, let it be so; they are right, but because it is fine weather.

On such days one strolls through the streets carelessly, and enjoys the lovely blue sky above him. There is not a cloud to be seen. The sun shines triumphantly, and the immaculate blue dome, radiant with morning splendour, seems to restore to the old city its days of pomp and pageantry. Walls and roofs define themselves with extraordinary force in the limpid atmosphere. As far as the eye can reach the arcade of the sky appears between the two files of houses. You advance indifferently and find at every turn entirely new opera scenery:—some vast massive palace, propped up against its rustic corners;—a street descending and rising towards a distant obelisk, and which in the broad sunshine envelopes its personages, as a picture would do, in alternate light and shadow;—some old dismantled palace converted into a warehouse, with red dragons sleeping against a grey wall and Italian pines and white almond trees flourishing on a knoll by its side;—some square with a large bubbling fountain and churches on the left, florid and pretentious like wealthy brides, smiling in the glittering azure, and with a promenade crossing

it, the trees of which are beginning to bloom ;—beyond an interminable solitary street, extending between the walls of a convent, or those of some invisible villa ; on the ridges pendant flowers ; here and there escutcheons, cracked by invasions of gilliflowers and mosses, the whole street partitioned into a black shadow and a dazzling light ; in the distance the transparent atmosphere, and the monumental gate of the Porta Pia, from which you see the grey campagna, and on the horizon the snow on the crests of the mountains.

On our return we followed this street which ascends and descends, bordered with palaces and old hedges of thorn, as far as Santa Maria Maggiore. This basilica, standing upon a large eminence, surmounted with its domes, rises nobly upwards, at once simple and complete, and when you enter it, it affords still greater pleasure. It belongs to the fifth century ; on being rebuilt at a later period, the general plan, its antique idea, was preserved. An ample nave, with a horizontal roof, is sustained by two rows of white Ionic columns. You are rejoiced to see so fine an effect obtained by such simple means ; you might almost imagine yourself in a Greek temple. It is said that a temple of Juno was robbed of these columns. Each of them bare and polished, with no other ornament than the delicate curves of its small capital, is of healthful and charming beauty. You appreciate here the good sense, and all that is agreeable in genuine natural construction, the file of trunks of trees which bear the beams, resting flat and providing a long walk. All that has since been added is barbarous, and first, the two chapels of Sixtus V. and Paul V., with their paintings by Guido, Josepin, and Cigoli, and the sculptures of Bernini, and the architecture of Fontana and Flaminio. These are celebrated names, and money has been prodigally spent, but instead of the slight means with which the ancients pro-

duced a great effect, the moderns produce a petty effect with great means. When the bewildered eye is satiated with the elaborate sweep of these arches and domes, with the splendours of polychromatic marbles, with friezes and pedestals of agate, with columns of oriental jasper, with angels hanging by their feet, and with all these bas-reliefs of bronze and gold, the visitor hastens to get away from it as he would to escape from a confectioner's shop. It seems as if this grand glittering box, gilded and laboured from pavement to lantern, caught up and tore at every point of its finery the delicate web of poetic revery ; the slender profile of the least of the columns, impresses one far more than any of this display of the art of upholdsterers and parvenus.—Similarly to this the façade, loaded with balustrades, and round and angular pediments, and statues roosting on its stones, is a *hôtel-de-ville* frontage. The campanile, belonging to the fourteenth century, alone presents an agreeable object; at that time it was one of the towers of the city, a distinctive sign which marked it on the old plans so black and sharp, and stamped it for ever on the still corporeal imaginations of monks and wayfarers. There are traces of every age in these old basilicas; you see the diverse states of Christianity, at first enshrined in pagan forms, and then traversing the middle ages and the renaissance to muffle itself up finally, and bedeck itself with modern finery. The Byzantine epoch has left its imprint in the mosaics of the great nave and the apsis, and in its bloodless and lifeless Christs and Virgins, so many staring spectres motionless on their gold backgrounds and red panels, the phantoms of an extinct art and a vanished society.

Quite near is the church of San Giovanni in Laterano, still more corrupt. The ceiling remains horizontal, but the antique columns have disappeared to give place to arcades and pilasters. Bernini has set up here twelve

colossal statues of the apostles, a jovial set in white marble, each in a green marble niche, and capering in the poses of bullies and studio models. Their agitated drapery and affected gestures seem to appeal to the public, as much as to say, 'See, is not that remarkable?' Here is the wretched taste of the seventeenth century, neither pagan nor Christian, or rather both, the one spoiling the other. Add to it the gilding of the ceiling, the festoons and rosaces of the porch, and the agreeable chapels; one, that of the Torlonia, quite new, is a charming marble boudoir in which to enjoy a cool atmosphere; white and embroidered with gold, it has a pretty panelled cupola, and is decked with elegant statues, very clean, very sentimental, very insipid, very much like fashionable dolls. Close by its side opens the chapel of Clement XII., ampler and more sumptuous; here, at least, the faces of the women have some intellectual traits, some reflection. some finesse; they are ladies of the eighteenth century, familiar with society, capable of maintaining their rank, and not the respectable would-be-interesting types of the 'keepsake' class. But the two chapels are merely parlours, one for furbelows and the other for crinoline. By way of contrast, and as complements to these, we were shown the grand altar in which the heads of St. Peter and St. Paul are enshrined. 'On this very altar,' said a young priest to us, 'St. Peter said mass.' A little before this, on passing, I entered the church of Santa Pudentiana, and saw the margin of a well in which the saint had collected the blood of more than three thousand martyrs.

Near St. John Lateran is a chapel containing three staircases. One of them came from the house of Pontius Pilate; it is covered with wood, and the devout ascend it on their knees. I have just seen these people stumbling, staggering, and clambering up; it takes half an hour thus

to hoist themselves to the top, clinging to its steps and walls with their hands the better to become impregnated with the sanctity of the place. It is worth while to see their earnestness, their large fixed eyes. One peasant especially, in a vest, ragged blue trowsers and hob-nailed shoes, as rude and clumsy as any of his beasts, made the boards ring in knocking his knees against them, and where the marble was visible, he kissed and rekissed the place. At the top is an image under a grating between tapers, which grating is kissed incessantly. A placard affixed to it displays a prayer of about twenty words; whoever recites this obtains an indulgence of a hundred days. The placard recommends the faithful to commit the prayer to memory in order to recite it as often as possible, and thus augment their stock of indulgences. One would imagine himself in a Buddhist country; there is gilding for the better and relics for the poorer classes—such is the comprehension of worship in Italy for the last two hundred years.

All these ideas vanish, when from the entrance you contemplate the majestic amplitude of the great nave, quite white beneath the gold of its arch. The sun, as it declines, streams through the windows and pours upon the pavement a cataract of light. The apsis, furrowed with ancient mosaics, mingles its curves of purple and gold with the dazzling splendours of rays launched forth like flaming darts. You advance and suddenly from the peristyle the admirable *plazza* spreads out before you. Nothing in Rome is equal to it; you could not imagine a simpler spectacle, one more grave and beautiful: at first, the sloping square vast and deserted; beyond, an esplanade with its growing grass; then, a long green avenue with files of leafless trees stretching away in the distance, and at the extremity, relieving on the sky, the great basilica of Santa Croce with its tile roof and brown campanile.

No idea can be formed of an expanse so broad, so full of interest, of a solitude so calm and so noble. The landscapes that frame it in on either side ennoble it still more: on the left, red masses of ruined arcades, and dismantled groves, form the shattered enclosure of the ancient wall of Belisarius; on the right, the wide campagna developes itself, with an open arcade in its midst, and in the distance, the blue striated mountains mottled with broad shadows and spotted with villages. The luminous atmosphere envelopes all these grand forms; the blue of the sky is of a divine softness and brilliancy, the clouds float peacefully like swans, and on all sides, between ruddy bricks and disjointed embrasures, in the midst of a network of cultivation, you see clusters of tall green oaks, cypresses, and pines illuminated by the declining sun.

I remained an hour on the steps of the *triclinium*, a kind of isolated apsis bordering the square; growing vegetation is undermining the steps, and lizards issue from holes and bask in the sunshine on the marble. All is silent; now and then a cart and a few asses traverse the deserted pavement. If there is a spot in the world calculated to calm weary spirits, and soothe them, and insensibly lull them into forgetfulness with noble and melancholy dreams, it is here. The spring has come: the mild light of a vernal sunshine rests on the stone slabs; the sun beams with indescribable grace, imparting to the balmy atmosphere its genial beneficence. Blossoms are bursting their envelopes, and these grand stone structures consigned to a neglected corner of Rome, seem, like exiles, to have acquired in solitude a harmonious serenity that attenuates their defects and augments their dignity. At the first glance the façade dissatisfies; its arcades, divided in the middle like high rooms to form a second story, its stacks of columns, its balustrades burdened with saints in com-

motion and parading themselves like actors at a finale,—its entire decoration seems an exaggeration. An hour after and the eye becomes accustomed to it; you yield gradually to the impressions of prosperity and beauty which all things reveal; you find the church solid and rich, you imagine the Pontifical processions that on appointed days have passed under its roof, and you liken it to some triumphal arch erected to give a fitting reception to the spiritual Cæsar the successor of the Cæsars of Rome.

The streets. San Andrea della Valle, Santa Maria in Trastevere. Rome has three hundred and forty churches, you do not require me to visit all.

What is better, I think, is to enter a church whenever you find one accidentally, just as the fancy takes you; Santa Maria sopra Minerva, for instance: to hear the music rolling through its solitary nave, and to see a flood of light streaming in through the violet window-panes;—Santa Trinita del Monte, to see the 'Descent from the Cross,' by Daniele da Volterra, so dilapidated; and especially to obtain a glimpse of the courts of this nunnery, so like a strong walled fortress, and so silent above the tumult of the Piazza di Spagna.—You go out with a quantity of half-ideas, or beginnings of ideas, in your mind, confused together and entangled, but secretly developing themselves; this busy swarm labours within like a batch of weaving silkworms, the web meanwhile growing constantly, until finally it ends unawares, and receives into its meshes all current events and casual encounters, a detail that at first passed unnoticed, but which now has got to be of interest. From this time these objects all harmonise, fitting in one with the other and forming a complete whole; there is nothing that does not find a place, for example, to-day under this band of azure and soft silky light stretched like a dais above the streets, the venerable grey stains of mud spotting the fronts of the houses; these worn

rounded corners, these rusty bars in which generations of spiders have inherited ancestral cobwebs; these dark corridors, their dust disturbed by the wind; these door-knockers with their paint scaled off and the iron plate that received their blows worn through in the service; these frying pans fretting with black grease at the foot of a leprous column; these donkey drivers entering the Barberini square with their animals loaded with wood, and especially the campagnards dressed in blue wool, clumsy shoes, and leather leggings, silently grouped together in front of the Pantheon like wild animals half frightened at the novelty of the city around them. They do not look stupid, these people, like our peasants; they rather resemble wolves and badgers imprisoned in traps. Many of the heads among them have regular, strong features, affording a striking contrast with those of the French soldiers, who have a more pleasing and a gentler aspect. One of these peasants with long black hair, and pale dignified face resembles the 'Suonatore,' of Raphael; his sandals attached to his feet by leather thongs are the same as those of antique statues. His old grey shapeless hat is decorated with a peacock's feather, and he sits encamped like an emperor against a post that supports a receptacle for street ordure. Among the women, ogling and displaying themselves at their windows, you distinguish two types: one the energetic head with square chin and face resting firmly on its base, intense black eyes, prominent nose, jutting forehead, short neck and broad shoulders; and the other the cameo head, delicate and amorous, with well-shaped, well-drawn eyes and brow, the features *spirituelle* and clearly defined, and inclining to an expression of affection and gentleness.

The lottery offices are full, and you read the numbers posted up in the windows. This is what most absorbs the attention of these people. They are always calcula-

ting and pondering over winning numbers, and speculating on chances based on age and day of the month, on the forms of numerals, on presentiments, on neuvaines of the saints and the Madonna; the imaginative brain is always at work, building up dream upon dream, and suddenly overflowing on the side of either fear or hope; they fall on their knees, and this spasm of desire or fear constitutes their religion.

This mode of feeling is of ancient date. We had just entered San Andrea della Valle in order to see the works of Lanfranco, and especially the four evangelists by Domenichino. They are very fine things but wholly pagan, and appeal only to a love of the picturesque. St. Andrea is an ancient Hercules. Around the evangelists are grouped a number of superb allegorical figures of women, one with bare limbs and breast raising her arms to heaven, and another with a casque bending forward with an air of the proudest arrogance. By the side of St. Mark frolicsome children play with an enormous lion, and from below, among the grand folds of raised drapery, you see amidst foreshortenings the naked thighs of angels. The spectator could have certainly sought for nothing there but vigorous, active, and powerful bodies capable of exciting the sympathy of a gesticulating athlete. He was not offended; on the contrary, his saint was represented as strong and as proud as possible, just as he himself figured him. If you had a prince beyond the seas, whom you had never seen, but who through some marvellous agency could either kill or enrich you as he pleased, these are the traits in which your imagination would figure him.

I have not much to tell you of Santa Maria in Trastevere, nor of other churches; I could do no more than repeat impressions already recorded. A double row of columns taken from an antique temple, a ceiling over-

charged with gold bosses and mouldings, an 'Assumption' by Guido placed too high, a round apsis with rigid old figures relieving on a gold background, statues of the dead solemnly reposing on their tombs in eternal sleep, this is Santa Maria in Trastevere. — Every church however, possesses distinct character or some striking detail. In San Pietro in Montorio, there is a 'Scourging,' by Sebastian del Penubo. The sculptural attitude, the vigorous forms, the strained and contorted muscles, of the patient and his executioners, call to mind Michael Angelo, who was the artist's counsellor and oftentimes his master.—In San Clemente, a buried church recently disinterred, and among columns of verd antique, you see paintings, by the light of a torch, that pass for the most ancient in Rome, hard, pitiful Byzantine figures, and among them a Virgin whose breast falls like the milk bag of an animal.—In San Francesco a Ripa, is a decoration of gilding and marble, the richest and most extravagant possible, constructed in the last century by corporations of cobblers, fruiterers, and millers, each division bearing the name of that which furnished the means. There is thus in almost every street some curious historical fragment. What is no less striking is the contrast between a church itself and its vicinity. On leaving San Francesco a Ripa you stop your nose, so strong is the odour of codfish; the yellow Tiber rolls along, between remnants of piles near large mournful edifices and before silent lugubrious streets. On returning from San Pietro in Montorio I found an indescribable quarter: horrible streets and filthy lanes; steep ascents bordered with hovels, and slimy corridors crowded with crawling human beings; old women, yellow and leaden visaged, sternly regarding you with their witch eyes; children huddled together in full security like dogs, and shamelessly imitating them on the pavement; ragged vagabonds in red

tatters, smoking and leaning against the walls, and a dirty swarming crowd hurrying on to the cook-shops. From top to bottom of this street the gutters stream with kitchen refuse, dyeing the sharp stones with its foul blackness. At the foot of the street is the Ponte San Sisto; there are no quays on the Tiber, and these sweltering sinks dip their surcharged steps into it like so many dripping towels washed in mire. Gilding and hovels, morals and physiognomies, government and faith, present and past, all amalgamate, and a moment's thought suffices to show their mutual dependence.

BOOK V.

SOCIETY.

CHAPTER I.

THE MIDDLE CLASSES—MANNERS AND CUSTOMS—LOVE.

I HAVE recorded for you about all that I could myself observe, that is to say, of the external world; as to the internal world, meaning by this, manners, morals, and character, you know that at the end of a month I could not say much on my own responsibility; but I am favoured with friends of various classes and opinions, all of whom are obliging and many of excellent judgment. I shall give you a summary of fifty or sixty conversations and searching discussions, without reservation.

In this city overflowing with works of art, there are very few artists. Thirty years ago there was Signor Camuccini, and a few cold imitators of David; now the standard is one of graceful insipidity; the sculptors polish marble perfectly in order to please the wealthy of other lands: that is their forte, and they go but little beyond it; most of them are purely mechanical copyists. The public in general has fallen quite as low; the Romans appreciate their masterpieces only through the admiration of strangers. And because a true culture is prohibited to them. It is impossible to travel without the Pope's passport, and the passport is often refused. A certain

Italian artist could not obtain one to visit Paris. 'Go, if you please,' was the reply; 'but if you do you cannot return.' Fears are entertained of their bringing back liberal maxims.

According to the report of strangers, physicians prescribe nothing but enemas, and the lawyers are professors of chicanery. Everybody is restricted to his speciality. The police, who let people do as they please, allow no one to concern himself with the sciences trenching on religion or politics. A man who studies or reads much, even in his own house, and with closed doors, is watched; he is annoyed constantly, and exposed to domiciliary visits in search of forbidden books, and accused of possessing obscene engravings. He is subject to the *precetto*, that is to say, to the obligation of returning to his home by the *Ave Maria*, and of not leaving it after sunset. Once failing to do so, and he is imprisoned; a foreign diplomate mentioned to me one of his friends to whom this happened.—They speak at Rome of a mathematician and one or two antiquarians; but in general, the savants here are either annoyed or despised. If anybody possesses erudite tastes, he conceals them, or apologises for them, always alluding to them as mania. Ignorance is welcome, for it renders people docile.

As to the professors, the best, those of the university, receive three or four hundred crowns a year, and give five lectures per week, which shows the high estimation in which science is held. In order to exist some resort to medical practice, others become architects, others clerks, and others librarians; several who are priests, are paid for masses, and all live with the utmost plainness. I counted on the almanack forty-seven professorships; there are five hundred pupils in the university, about ten to each chair. The Pope has just authorised a course on geology, which has an audience of four, no more are

in attendance on the course on profane history. As an offset to this the courses on theology are quite numerous. This shows the spirit of the institution; the sciences of the middle ages flourish here, while modern sciences remain outside the door. There are but two public schools in Rome, the Roman Seminary, under the direction of the cardinal-vicar, for the formation of priests, and the Roman College, in the hands of the Jesuits, in which Latin and Greek are studied; no Italian nor French, nor any other living language, and no history excepting Roman history, back to the time of Constantine. So insignificant are the studies, that when a pupil wishes to enter the congregation, he is obliged, even if the most advanced, to recommence his studies from the first principles. In the medical school there is no clinique on midwifery; instruction in this branch is derived from pictures representing the organs, which pictures are covered with curtains; a notorious ignoramus has just been installed professor here through female intrigue. The rest is in keeping. The professors, said a genuine physician to me, are mere village barbers; a few only have passed one or two weeks at Paris, and practise a treatment in the hospitals a century behind the age. In the asylum for cutaneous diseases, the patients are subjected to incisions in the head; when the wound is cicatrised they are arranged in rows, and a brush soaked in a certain mixture is passed over their heads, the same brush answering for all, and perhaps so employed for years. You may judge by the foregoing of the dignity and importance of the liberal professions.

Is there in Rome any degree of moral energy? Most of my friends reply, no; the government has demoralised men. People are extraordinarily intelligent, adroit, and calculating, but no less egotistical; not one, or scarcely one, would risk his life or his fortune for his country.

They declaim, and are willing to have others take the lead, but will not subject themselves to the smallest sacrifice. They regard one who thus devotes himself as a dupe; they smile ironically on seeing the excitement of a Frenchman who, to the cry of country or glory, rushes off to get his bones broken.

They do not surrender themselves, but accommodate themselves to you; they are infinitely polite and patient, never even faintly smiling at the barbarisms and grotesque errors of pronunciation which a stranger always commits. They remain their own masters, unwilling to compromise themselves, and are only concerned in keeping out of scrapes, in turning others to account, and in duping each other. Delicacy, as we understand it, is unknown to them; an antiquary of reputation readily accepts commissions from merchants on all objects the sale of which he procures; and there are a number of usurers among the wealthy and the great.

Everybody here has a protector; it is impossible to live without one. You must have one to obtain the most trifling thing, to obtain justice, to receive your income, to preserve your property. Everything goes by favour. Keep a pretty, complacent woman in your employ, or in your family, and you will come out of all difficulties as pure as snow. One of my friends compares this country to the Orient, where he has travelled, with this difference, that it is not force here, but address which succeeds, the clever protected man obtaining all. Life is a league and a combat, but subterranean. Under a government of priests there is a horror of making a display; there is no brutal energy: one mines and countermines as skilfully as he can, and lays traps ten years in advance.

As enterprise and action are prejudicial and regarded unfavourably, indolence becomes honourable. Innumerable people live in Rome nobody knows how, without

either occupation or revenue. Some earn ten crowns a month and expend thirty; apart from any visible pursuit they have all sorts of resources and expedients. In the first place the government expends two or three hundred thousand crowns in alms, and every noble or prince deems charity a duty on account of his rank, and traditionally. Such a one gives away six thousand crowns a year. Again there are *buona mancia* everywhere; certain people present fifteen petitions a day, one or two of which are successful; the petitioner eats a good dinner in the evening, and thus always has an occupation. This occupation has its instruments; you see public scriveners in the open air, with hats on their heads, and umbrellas by their sides, engaged in writing these petitions and holding their papers fast with stones. Finally, in this state of universal misery all help each other; a beggar is not an outcast, nor a criminal; he is honest, as honest as anybody, only he happens to have been unfortunate; with this reflection, the poorest bestow on him a few *baiocchi*. Thus is sloth maintained. Among the mountains, near Frascati, I found at every pasturage a man or child ready to open a gate; at the church doors some poor mortal is always there to lift up for you the leather curtain suspended before the door. In this way they obtain five or six cents a day, and on this they live.

I know a *custode* who gets six crowns a month; besides which he occasionally repairs an old coat, and receives for this three or four *baiocchi* more; his family is half starving, and he is sometimes obliged to borrow a couple of pauls (twenty cents) of a neighbour in order to live the week out. And yet his son and daughter take their promenade every Sunday in very good clothes. The girl is honest because she is not yet married; once the husband is caught it will be another matter; she must naturally provide for her toilette and aid her husband. Countless

households are thus maintained on the beauty of the wife. The husband shuts his eyes and sometimes opens them, but in the latter case, simply the better to fill his pockets. Shame does not incommode him; the people of the *mezzo ceto* are so poor, that when children come, a man is to be pitied, and he suffers so much unless fortified by a rich protector. 'My wife wants dresses; let her earn them!' Besides this the general influence of the government is debasing; man is forced into indignities; he is accustomed to crouching, to kissing the hands of ecclesiastics, to self-humiliation; from generation to generation self-respect, resistance, and manliness, have been extirpated as noxious weeds; the possessor of such qualities is trodden down, and their seed is at length lost. A type of such characters is the *cassandrino* of the ancient marionnettes; he is a crushed-out layman whose interior springs of action are broken, who jests at everything, even at himself, and who, stopped by brigands, lets them despoil him, and facetiously addresses them as 'huntsmen.' This bitter humour and voluntary harlequinism aid in rendering him insensible to the ills of life. This character is quite common; the husband, resigned and dishonoured, contentedly yields to his wife's good fortune. With his mind at ease he takes his promenade, sips his coffee at three cents a cup, speculates on the weather, and enjoys the display of a new coat on the public thoroughfares. The Romans, both male and female, put on their backs all the money they earn, and all that is given to them. Their food is poor in quantity and in quality, consisting of crusts, cheese, cabbage, and salads. They have no fire in winter, and their furniture is miserable, everything being sacrificed to appearances. The streets and the *Pincio* swarm with women in handsome velvet mantillas, and young people well gloved and frizzled, bright, showy, and spruce outside—but do not look beyond.

Alongside of indolence ignorance flourishes like thistles by the side of nettles. One of our friends has resided some time in the environs of Lake Nemi: it was impossible, after noon, to obtain a letter, because the doctor, curé, and apothecary chose that hour for their promenades, and no one in the village but them knew how to read. It is about the same thing at Rome. I am told of a noble family who live in two and let five rooms; from this they derive their income. Out of four daughters one only is able to write a note, and she is called the learned (*la dotta*). The father and son frequent a café, drink a glass of pure water, and read a newspaper; — such is their life. The young man has no future; fortunate is he if he can obtain a place in the *datarie*, or elsewhere, at six crowns a month. There is no commerce, no manufactures, no army. A good many become priests and monks, and support themselves on their masses; they dare not seek their fortunes outside their country, the police closing and locking the door on all who go out.

Houses, accordingly, are mere kennels. The young ladies in question remain in slatternly morning-gowns, bundled up like kitchen drudges, until four in the afternoon. I knew of one domestic establishment where, for a long time, I supposed the ladies to be women employed to darn stockings; I found them engaged in cleaning boots. Confusion, foul linen and broken crockery strewed about on the tables and on the floor was all; a lot of children ate in the kitchen. One Sunday I noticed them out of doors in their hats and appearing like ladies, and I learn that their brother is a lawyer; this brother makes his appearance and he is dressed like a gentleman.

I inquire how these young people pass their time, and the reply is—doing nothing; the great aim in this country is to do as little as possible. A young Roman may be compared to a man enjoying his siesta; he is inert, dis-

likes effort, and would be angry if disturbed or forced to undertake anything. When he leaves his office he puts on his best clothes and posts himself beneath a certain window, which he does every afternoon. From time to time the wife or young girl raises a corner of the curtain, so as to show him that she knows he is there. This occupies the thoughts of all, which is not surprising as the siesta predisposes towards love. Men promenade the Corso constantly; they follow women and know their names and diminutives, their lovers and the past and present of all their intrigues, and thus live, their heads filled with gossip. Accordingly, thus occupied, their minds become acute and penetrating. Amongst themselves they are polite, affable, and complimentary, but always on their guard, dissembling, and engaged in supplanting each other and playing each other tricks.

In the middle class there are evening parties but of a singular character. Lovers watch one another from one end of the room to the other; it is impossible to hold a conversation with a young lady, her lover having forbidden it. Their beverage is water without sugar. Everybody is busy with his own thoughts or observing his neighbour's movements. Occasionally, they emerge from this meditative mood in order to listen to a little music. Amongst the inferior portion of this class nothing is served, not even a glass of water. There is a piano and, generally, some one sings. There is no fire in winter; the ladies form a circle and retain their muffs; those highest in favour are honoured with hand-warmers. This suffices—people are not very hard to please.

Young ladies are kept shut up, and, consequently, are always trying to get out. Lately, as the story goes, one of them succeeded in escaping in the evening to a rendezvous and she caught cold and died; her young friends made a sort of demonstration and thronged to kiss

the body; they regarded her as a martyr, dead in behalf of the ideal. Their life consists in quietly boasting of their lovers, that is to say, of some young man who is thinking about them, who courts them, who stations himself under their window, and so on. This tickles their imagination and supplies the place of a romance; instead of reading novels they act them. In this way they undergo five or six love experiences before marriage. As far as virtue is concerned their tactics are peculiar; they surrender the approaches, guard the fortress, and skilfully, persistently, and resolutely hunt for a husband.

This gallantry, moreover, is not particularly delicate. On the contrary, it is either singularly innocent or singularly coarse. These very young men who hang around a window for months, indulging in fond dreams, employ the terms of Rabelais in accosting a woman that walks alone in the streets. Even with the woman they love, they use terms with a double meaning and indelicate witticisms. One of my friends happened one day to be of a party on a country excursion along with a young gentleman and lady who seemed to be mutually smitten, and who constantly forgot that they were in public. He remarked to his neighbour, 'Perhaps they are a newly-married couple and imagine themselves alone.' His neighbour made no reply and seemed to be embarrassed —he was the lady's husband.—Our friend asserts that the great Italian passion so lauded by Stendhal, that persevering adoration and devoted worship, that love capable of self-nourishment and of life endurance, is as rare here as in France. At all events it lacks delicacy; some women are enamoured but only with externals; what they admire is good looks, fine clothes, fine complexion, gold chains, and the whitest of linen. There is nothing of the gentle or feminine in their character; they might prove to be good companions on dangerous occasions

when energy is required, but in ordinary circumstances they are tyrants, and in the matter of pleasure exceedingly positive. Experts in such matters declare that a man enters on servitude on becoming the lover of a Roman woman; she exacts endless attentions and absorbs one's time mercilessly; a man must always be at his post, offer his arm, bring bouquets, make presents of trinkets, show constant devotion, and be ecstatic, for if not, she concludes that he has another mistress, and will call him instantly to account, demanding unmistakable proofs to the contrary on the spot. In this country, where one's time is taken up neither by politics, industrial pursuits, literature, nor science, it is a species of merchandise without a market; according to the economical principle of supply and demand its value diminishes proportionately and even ceases entirely; so rated a woman may employ it in genuflexions and small talk.

They have become accustomed to this life, which seems to us so limited and almost dead. Deprived of literature and the resources of travelling they make no comparisons with themselves or with others; things have always been so and always will be; once accepted, this fatality seems to be no more remarkable than the malaria. Besides this, many circumstances contribute to render this life supportable. A person can live here very cheaply; a family with two children and a servant requires 2500 francs; 3000 francs are as much as 6000 francs in Paris. One may walk the streets in a cap and thread-bare coat; nobody troubles his neighbour, for everybody is thinking of pleasure; frolics are tolerated; procure a confessional ticket, avoid liberals, prove your docility and indifference, and you will find the government patient, accommodating, indulgent, and paternal. Finally, the people do not exact much in the matter of pleasure; a Sunday promenade in a fine coat in the

Borghese gardens and a dinner at a *trattoria* in the country is something in store that satisfies the dreams of a week. They know how to lounge (*flaner*), to gossip, to be contented with the little they possess, to relish a fresh salad, to enjoy a glass of pure water, sipped in full view of a splendid effect of light. There is, moreover, in their composition a large stock of good humour. They think that one ought to pass his time agreeably, that useless indignation is folly, and sadness a disease; their temperament seeks the joyous as a plant seeks sunshine. To good humour must be added unaffected familiarity. A prince and his domestics freely converse and laugh with each other; a peasant of the environs towards whom you may stand in the relation of a lord, thee's-and-thou's you without any difficulty; a young gentleman in society describes and criticises a young lady as if she were his mistress. Unceremoniousness is complete; the petty restraints of our society, our reserve and politeness, are unknown to them.

Do they ardently desire to become Italians? My friends assert that they would detest the Piedmontese before the end of a month. They are accustomed to license, to exemption from penalties, to indolence and the system of favouritism, and would feel ill at ease if deprived of all this. On the whole, whoever has a patron, or is well connected, may do as he pleases, provided he does not concern himself with politics. The new tribunals organised in the Romagna, for example, at Bologna, have broken up and punished gangs of robbers who had receivers of stolen goods in the best society. A peasant killed his enemy, but his cousin being in the service of a cardinal, he escaped with a punishment of two years in the galleys; he was condemned for twenty years, but by degrees obtained his freedom and returned to his village, where he is no less esteemed than he was before.

They are veritable savages, and would not easily submit to legal constraint. Besides all this, they lack moral sentiment, and if they do not possess it the fault is not wholly due to their rulers. Consider the bad German governments of the last century, quite as absolute and arbitrary as this one; society was honest and principles were rigid, and the temperament of the nation attenuated the vices of the constitution; at Rome it aggravates them. Man here has, naturally, no idea of justice; he is too vigorous, too violent, and too imaginative to accept or impose checks on himself; if he goes to war he has no idea of limiting the rights of war. Six days ago a bomb exploded in the house of the papal bookseller; the progressive party in Europe thus makes known its energy and frightens, it supposes, its enemies; like Orsini, the end with them justifies the means. It is well known how Rossi was assassinated. In this respect the nations of the west of Europe cherish sentiments which the Romans lack.

CHAPTER II.

THE NOBILITY—THE SALOONS—INDOLENCE—THE CAMPAGNA—THE VILLA OF POPE JULIUS III—THE PORTA PRIMA—FRASCATI—TUSCULUM—THE VILLA ALDOBRANDINI—GROTTO FERRATA.

THE aristocracy is said to be very shallow. My informants review the principal families for me. Several have travelled, and are tolerably well informed, and not badly disposed; but through a singular characteristic, due perhaps to too little crossing of blood, to a stagnation of the blood always confined to the same veins, almost all are mentally obtuse and narrow. One may study their portraits in a clever comedy by Count Giraud 'L'Ajo nel imbarrazzo:' Prince Lello, in the 'Tolla' of Edmund About, is taken from life, the ridiculous letters therein being authentic.—I reply that I am acquainted with four or five nobles, or Roman grand seigneurs, all well-educated and agreeable men, some erudite or learned, one among others prepossessing as a prince, as *spirituel* as a journalist, as intelligent as an academician, and besides this, an artist and philosopher, so delicate and fecund in wit and in ideas of every description that he alone would absorb the conversation in the most brilliant and liberal of Parisian *salons*. They reply to this by telling me that I must not base my judgments on exceptions, and that in a company of blockheads, however dull, there are always some people of sense. Three or four—and no more—are frank and open, and stand out against the sheeplike crowd. These are liberals, while the rest are supporters of the Pope, and are enveloped

within their education, prejudices, and inertia, like a mummy wrapped up in its bandages. You find on their table petty devotional books, and coarse songs, their French importations consisting of these alone. Their sons serve in the *garda nobile*, part their hair in the middle, and run after ladies, smirking like the barber that dressed it.

There are very few *salons*; the social principle is wanting, and they care but little for amusement. Every grand seigneur remains at home, and receives his intimates in the evening, who are people belonging to the house as much as its curtains and furniture. There is no frequenting of society, as in Paris, through ambitious motives, in order to form useful connections and an establishment; such proceedings would be useless; people here fish in other streams, and perforce, in an ecclesiastical stream. The cardinals, generally, are sons of peasants or of people of the middle class, each surrounded by intimates that have followed him for twenty years; his physician, confessor, and valet owe their places to him, and they dispense his favours accordingly. A young man can succeed only by thus attaching himself to a prelate's fortunes, or to those of his dependents, which fortune is a big vessel impelled by the wind, with a crowd of smaller ones dragging after it. Remark this, that the great credit of these prelates does not secure them *salons*. In order to obtain place or favour you must not address yourself to a cardinal, to the chief of a department; he replies courteously and there the matter rests. You must push the secret springs; you must address his barber or chief domestic, the man that helps him to change his shirt; some morning he will mention you and exclaim earnestly: 'Ah, your Eminence, this man holds sound opinions, and he speaks of you so respectfully!'

Another circumstance fatal to the social spirit is the

absence of self-abandonment. People distrust each other and measure their words, and are reserved. A foreigner here, who has entertained for the last twenty years, remarked that if he should leave Rome, he would not be obliged to write two letters in six months, so few friends has he in this country. The sole occupation, everywhere, is love; the women pass the entire day in balconies, or if wealthy, go to mass, and from thence to the Corso again and again. Without daily escape, as elsewhere, sensibility, when excited, produces violent passions, and sometimes remarkable explosions, as, for instance, the despair of the young Marchioness Vittoria Savorelli, who died of a broken heart because her betrothed, a Doria, abandoned her; and again, the marriage of a certain lady of rank with a French subordinate officer, who saddled his horse in a palace court, and others of a romantic and tragic *dénouement.*

The great misfortune for the men is this—they have nothing to do; they prey on themselves or sink into a lethargic state. For lack of occupation they intrigue against each other, play the spy and worry themselves like lazy monks shut up in a convent. Especially towards evening is the burden of indolence the most insupportable; you see them in their immense saloons before their rows of pictures, yawning, pacing about and waiting. Two or three acquaintances drop in, always the same persons, and the bearers of petty gossip. Rome in this respect is simply a provincial town. They inquire of each other about dismissed servants, a new piece of furniture, visits returned too late or made too soon; the houses and private life of everybody are constantly discussed; nobody enjoys the grand incognito of Paris or London. A few interest themselves in music or archæology; these talk about récent excavations, and the imagination and affirmations have full scope: these studies alone possess

any vitality; the rest are languishing or dead; foreign reviews and newspapers do not arrive or are stopped every other number, while modern books are wanting. They cannot converse on their own careers, because they have none; diplomacy and all the important offices are in the hands of the priests, while the army is foreign. Nothing remains but agriculture. Many devote themselves to this, but indirectly; they employ the peasantry through the agency of the *mercanti di campagna*; these generally sublet to the Neapolitan drovers, who come here to pass the winter and spring. The soil is good, and the grass abundant. This or that *mercanti* sublets at 25 crowns for six months, what he has hired at 11 crowns for the year; he gains about five crowns more on pasturage, thus making nearly 300 per cent., his average profits being about 200 per cent.; in this way he acquires a large fortune. Some ruin themselves through too extensive speculations, as in the buying and fattening of cattle that are carried off by disease; but others, enriched, become prominent among the *bourgeoisie,* dress well, begin to reason, form a class of liberals, and look forward to a revolution which will place them at the head of affairs, and especially of municipal matters. Some, having acquired enormous wealth, purchase an estate and then a title; one of them is now a duke.—A Roman noble cannot dispense with these people; he is unacquainted with the peasantry, as he does not reside amongst them; if he attempted to treat with them directly he would encounter a league. He has nothing in common with them, and is not liked by them; in their eyes he plays the part of a parasite. On the other hand, he stands badly with the *mercante,* by whom he feels himself plundered. The *mercante,* in his turn, in the eyes of the peasants, passes as a sort of necessary usurer. The three classes are separated; there is no natural government.

It is different in that part of the Romagna which has become Italian, where the nobles reside on their estates. But, excepting in two or three cantons, the Roman nobles who desire to live on their estates and manage matters themselves, and assume the moral and economical control of the country, find more obstacles now to contend with than ever. In the first place, labour is scarce; the conscription of Victor Emmanuel has drawn largely on the Abruzzians, who formerly did all the drudgery, while the Roman railroads absorb a large portion of the Romans, the Roman campagna being almost depopulated. Furthermore commerce is too much dependent on caprice; the exportation of grain is not free; special permits are necessary for every operation or enterprise, and these are obtainable only according to your degree of influence. The government even interferes with private affairs; for example, a tenant or farmer pays you no rent; you grant him a respite of three months, and at the end of this another term of three months, and so on. Finally, out of patience, you conclude to expel him from the premises; but his nephew is a chanoine, and the governor of the district requests you to oblige the poor man with an extension of time. A year passes and you employ an officer; the officer stays proceedings, on learning at the door that a cardinal has interested himself in the matter. You encounter a cardinal in society, and he entreats you, on the part of the Pope, to be merciful to an honest man who has never failed at his paschal duties, and whose nephew is conspicuous for his virtues in the *datarie*.

In general the process is as follows. The tenant or peasant demands and obtains several times in succession a delay of fifteen days. In this way he manages to catch the *ferie*, that is to say, the fête days near to Christmas, the Carnival, Easter, St. Peter's day, and those of the autumn. Some of these fêtes last two months;

on account of the sanctity of the hour, he claims still further indulgence, whereupon the judge grants him four months more. Having accomplished this he appeals, and again gains considerable time. Then he addresses himself to the *uditore santissimo*, a magistrate who is in direct communication with the Pope, and who is always very tender to the poor and the lower class. This is a new respite. He next alleges that his wife is in an interesting situation and approaching her confinement; officers are directed to keep away, and you must wait for forty days after the accouchment. The forty days are about to expire; he sublets the house to an insolvent friend, on condition that he remains in it as guest. You are then obliged to commence proceedings anew against this scapegoat, who, if he happens to be tonsured, compels you to go into the tribunal of the cardinal-vicar.—Your shortest way is to pay all expenses, and abandon your lease, and offer a small sum to your debtor to pack himself off and pursue his avocations elsewhere.

An Italian noble I am acquainted with possesses several houses in Rome. In front of one of these, on the opposite side of the street, is the garden of a nunnery; the superior of this establishment observes that from the third story of his house a glimpse can be had of a corner of the garden. The proprietor receives an order from the cardinal-vicar to close up and to board at his own expense the probable culpable window. I might cite numberless instances of similar annoyance. It is enough to disgust one with proprietorship. . . . .

Man requires some fixed pursuit to keep him employed and rigid justice to keep him within bounds; he is like water which requires a declivity and a dyke; otherwise the limpid, useful, active element becomes a stagnant and fetid quagmire. Here ecclesiastical repression dries up the stream, and the regime of caprice incessantly under-

mines the dyke; the quagmire exists, as we see in the foregoing details. If we find corruption and misery, it is because freedom of action is wanting, and a rigid standard of justice. My friends recommend me not to judge the nation by its present condition; it is in reality better than it seems; it is necessary to discriminate between what it is and what it may be. According to them, it is rich in energy and in intellect, and in order to convince me, they are going to take me to-morrow into the country and the outskirts of the city. You must see these, they say, before reasoning on the people.

March 21. *The Country.*—We left by the Porta del Popolo, and pursued our way through a long, dusty suburb; here, too, are ruins. We entered on the right, the half-abandoned old villa of Pope Julius III. On pushing open a dilapidated door, an elegant court appears surrounded by a circular portico, sustained by square columns with Corinthian capitals; this mass has subsisted through the solidity of its ancient construction. Now it is a sort of shed devoted to domestic purposes; peasants and washwomen, with their sleeves rolled up are straying about. The brinks of the old marble basins are hung with linen awaiting a rinsing; a duck on one leg contemplates the copious bubbling water which, distributed formerly with such princely prodigality, still flows and murmurs as in early days; screens of reeds, heaps of brush, with manure and animals, are gathered around the columns. These are the inheritors of Vignolles, Michael Angelo, and Annibale Caro, of that wise, warlike, literary, court, which resorted here at evening to entertain the generous old pope! On the left, a grand staircase without steps, a sort of easy grade on which a man could ascend on horseback, developes the recesses and fine curves of its arches.

On reaching the summit we forced a sort of latch, and

entered a *loggia*; after his supper the pope came here to converse and to enjoy the fresh breezes and to gaze on the broad campagna spread out before him. Columns support it; on the ceiling are still distinguishable the remains of elaborate panels once filled with their animated groups of figures; a vast balcony prolongs the promenade and brings the air from without more freely to the lungs. Nothing could be more grandly conceived, nothing more appropriate to the climate, and more gratifying to artistic senses; this was the proper place to discuss architectural designs, and to rearrange the groupings of figures. Sketches were offered to the pope's inspection and pencilled in his presence; such a man, so liberal, so fond of the beautiful, was organised to sympathise with such spirits. Now, nothing remains but a kind of granary; the ironwork of the balcony is loose in its sockets, the panels have fallen out, the columns in the court have lost their stucco, and the mortar and brick can be seen within; alone, the columns of the *loggia* still raise their beautiful white marble shafts. Two or three painters come, in the spring, to nestle in this ruin.

There is a whirlwind of dust, and the sun feebly lights up the grey canopy of cloud; the sky seems like lead; the sirocco, enervating and feverish, blows in squalls. The Ponte Molle appears between its four statues; behind is a miserable inn, and immediately after this the desert begins. Nothing is more striking than these four shattered statues in profile against the grand solitary waste, forming an entrance to the tomb of a nation. On either side winds the Tiber, yellow and slimy, like a diseased serpent. Neither tree, nor house, nor any cultivation is to be seen on its banks. At long distances you detect brick moles, some tottering ruin beneath a headdress of plants, and on a declivity or in a hollow, a quiet herd of long-horned buffaloes ruminating. Bushes

and miserable stunted shrubs shelter themselves in the hollows between the hills; the fennel suspends its fringe of delicate verdure on the flank of an escarpment, but nowhere is a veritable tree to be seen, which is the melancholy part of it. Beds of torrents furrow the uniform green with white lines; the useless waters wind about, half lost, or quietly sleep in pools amongst decaying herbage.

On all sides, as far as the eye can see, this solitude is a rolling waste of strange, monotonous undulations, and for a long time one strives to recall some known forms with which their strangeness may be compared. No one has ever seen the like, for nature does not produce such forms; something has been superadded to nature to augment the pell-mell and anarchy of these upheavals. Whether salient or depressed their contours are those of a crushed human structure, disintegrated through the incessant attacks of time. You imagine ancient cities crumbled away and afterwards covered with earth, gigantic cemeteries gradually effaced, and lost beneath the verdure. You feel that a vast population once dwelt here; that it ploughed and tilled the soil and overspread it with buildings and cultures; that now nought of this subsists, its vestiges even having disappeared; that fresh loam and a new turf have formed a new layer of ground, and you experience a vague sentiment of anguish, the same as if standing on the shores of a deep sea you saw through its abyss of motionless waters, as in a dream, the indistinct forms of some vast city sunk beneath its waves.

You ascend two or three of these heights; on contemplating the immense circle of the horizon entirely strewn with these masses of hills, and this pell-mell of funereal hollows, your heart sinks with hopeless discouragement. This is an amphitheatre, an amphitheatre the day after grand performances, and now a silent sepul-

chre: a rugged line of blue mountains, a distant barrier of solid rocks serves as its wall; its decorations and all its marbles have perished; nothing remains of it but its inclosure and a soil formed out of human bones. Here for centuries the bloodiest and most imposing of human tragedies were performed; all nations, Gauls, Spaniards, Latins, Africans, Germans, and Asiatics, furnished its recruits and its hordes of gladiators; innumerable corpses, now mingled together and forgotten, form its turf.

Some peasants wearing stout gaiters pass on horseback with guns slung over their shoulders, and then shepherds in sheepskins with vacant, brilliant and dreamy eyes. We reach Porta Prima; ragged little urchins and a girl in tatters and naked down to the stomach, cling to the carriage begging.

At Porta Prima we inspect recent excavations, the house of Livia, where six months ago a statue of Augustus was found. All this is buried beneath the surface. What accumulations of soil in Rome! Lately, it is said, under one of the churches another was discovered, and under that still another, probably of the third century. The first had fallen in during some invasion of the barbarians, and on the inhabitants returning its ruins formed a solid mass, the shafts of the columns serving them as the foundations for a second church. The same thing happened to the second church, and the third arose on that. Montaigne mentions buried temples at Rome the roofs of which were a lance's length below the pavement.—Passing along a road one sees in every country a layer of black mould which men cultivate; out of this springs the entire vegetable, animal, and human population; the living return to it in order to issue from it in other forms; this manure bed, over-lying the grand inert mineral mass, is the sole movable portion that rises and falls according to the passing changes of existence. Certainly, in no place

has the world been more violently agitated or more completely upheaved than here.

You penetrate with torches into these subterranean rooms supported by props and dripping with moisture. In passing the torch along the walls, various fine ornaments reappear, one by one, such as birds, green foliage, and pomegranates laden with their red fruit; it is the same simple, severe, healthy taste of antiquity, such as is disclosed in Herculaneum and Pompeii.

The sun descends in a broad pale mist; the wind, strong and blinding, raises up clouds of dust; under this double veil the dull rays, like those of a mass of red-hot metal, vaguely extinguish themselves in the infinite desolation. On the summit of an escarpment a miserable tottering ruin is seen, the acropolis of Fidenæ, and on another, the dark square of a feudal tower.

March 22.—To-day, an excursion on foot to Frascati; the sky is overcast, but the sun in places pierces through the heavy canopy of clouds.

As one rises towards the devastated heights of Tusculum the prospect becomes more grand and more melancholy. The immense Roman campagna widens and spreads itself out like a sterile waste. Towards the east arise bristling mountain crags on which storm clouds repose; to the west Ostia is distinguishable, and the faint line of the sea, a sort of vapoury band, white like the smoke of a furnace. At this distance and from this height the mounds which emboss the plain are half effaced; they resemble the long, feeble undulations of a gloomy ocean. No cultivation; the wan hue of abandoned fields prolongs its dull, faded tints until the eye can no longer detect them. Heavy clouds cover it with shadow, and all those dark purple bands stripe the ruddy background as in the old mantle of a herdsman.

Boldness, frankness and energy, without gaiety, charac-

terise my young guide. He is nineteen years of age, knows five or six French words, does no work and lives on his profession of cicerone, or, in other words, on the few pauls which he picks up by chance. His deportment is neither agreeable, engaging, nor respectful; he is rather gloomy and curt, and gives his explanations with the gravity of a savage. We however, as strangers, are to him rich lords. They tell me that these people are naturally proud, even haughty and disposed to equality. At Rome in a café, a waiter at the end of three days will, on hearing a stranger venture on his first Italian phrases, criticise him and exclaim aloud in his presence, 'He is getting on well, he is improving.'

We leave the Villa Mandragone on our left, a vast ruin decked with swaying plants and shrubbery. On the right the Villa Aldobrandini displays its avenues of colossal platanes, its sculptured hedges, and its architecture of staircases, balustrades and terraces. At its entrance, backed against the mountain, is a portico covered with columns and statues, discharging floods of waters which pours into it from a cascade of steps above. This is the Italian rural palace constructed for a nobleman of classic tastes, one who relished nature according to the landscapes of Poussin and Claude Lorraine. In the interior the walls are decorated in fresco with 'Apollo and the nine Muses,' 'The Cyclops and Vulcan at his Forge,' several ceilings by the Chevalier d'Arpino, and 'Adam and Eve,' 'David and Goliath,' and a 'Judith,' simple and beautiful, by Domenichino. It is impossible to regard the men of that day as of the same species as ourselves. They were peasants, tonsured or untonsured; men ready for bold actions, voluptuous and superstitious, their heads running on corporeal images, sometimes contemplating in their idle hours, as in a vision, the form of a mistress or the torso of a saint; men that had heard the stories of the

Bible or of Livy related, and had sometimes read Ariosto, possessing no critical power or delicacy, and exempt from the multitude of subtile conceptions with which our literature and education abound. In the history of David and Goliath, all niceties for them consisted of the diverse movements of an arm, and various attitudes of the body. The invention of the Chevalier d'Arpino reduces itself to the forcing of that movement into a furious action, and that attitude into a contortion. That which interests the moderns in a head, the expression of some rare profound sentiment, elegance, and whatever denotes *finesse* and native superiority, is never apparent with them, save in that precocious investigator, that refined, saddened thinker, that universal feminine genius, Leonardo da Vinci. Domenichino's 'Judith,' here, is a fine, healthy, innocent, peasant girl, well painted and well proportioned. If you seek the exalted, complicated sentiments of a virtuous, pious, and patriotic woman who has just converted herself into a courtesan and an assassin, who comes in with bloody hands, feeling perhaps, under her girdle, the motions of the child of the man whom she has just murdered, you must seek for them elsewhere; you must read the drama of Hebbel, the 'Cenci' of Shelley, or propose the subject to a Delacroix, or to an Ary Scheffer.

I satisfied myself this evening of the truth of this by reading Vasari. Take, for instance, the lives of the two Zucchero, among so many others of the same stamp. They were mechanics brought up in a studio from the age of ten, producing as much as possible, seeking orders and repeating everywhere the same biblical or mythological subjects, whether the labours of Hercules, or the creation of man. Their minds were not encumbered with dissertations or theories such as we possess since the days of Diderot and Goethe. If mention is made of Hercules or of the

Almighty they imagine a vigorous muscular figure, naked or draped, in a blue or brown mantle. In a similar manner, all these princes, abbés, and private persons who decorated their houses or churches, only sought to please the eye; they had probably read the tales of Bandello, or the descriptions of Marini, but in substance literature then did no more than *illustrate* painting. To-day it is the reverse.

We ascended to the heights of Ancient Tusculum. Here you see the remains of a villa which, they say, belonged to Cicero: shapeless masses of disjointed bricks, and half-disinterred substructures, all melting away under the attacks of winter and the encroachments of vegetation. Occasionally, as you advance, you detect the walls of an antique chamber, appearing alongside of the road, in the flanks of an escarpment. On the summit is a small theatre, strewn with scattered fragments of columns. This desolate mountain, covered in some places with low thorny bushes, but generally bare, where sharp broken crags project above the meagre soil, is of itself a vast ruin. Man once dwelt here, but he has disappeared; it has the aspect of a cemetery. On the summit stands a cross above a heap of blackened stones: the wind sighs as it passes through them, singing its lugubrious psalmody. The mountains to the south, red with still leafless trees, the promontory of Monte Cavi, the range of desolate heights beneath their wild head-dress of yellow plants, the Roman campagna, under a dull shroud of scattered clouds, all suggest a field of the dead.

The watered forests through which you pass on descending the mountain, bloom with white and red anemones, and with periwinkles of a charming tender blue. A little farther on the abbey of Grotto Ferrata, with its mediæval battlements, its old arcades of elegant columns, and

Domenichino's sober earnest frescoes, somewhat relieves the mind of funereal impressions. On returning, at Frascati, the music of running streams, the blooming almond, and the hawthorns in the green hollow of the mountain, and the bright young wheat springing up, gladden the heart with an appearance of spring. The sky has become clear, and the exquisite azure is visible, flecked with little white clouds soaring aloft like doves ; all along the road round arches of aqueducts nobly develop themselves in the luminous atmosphere. Nevertheless, even under this sun, all these ruins strike you painfully—they testify to so much misery ; sometimes it is a tottering vault undermined at its base ; again, an isolated arch, or a fragment of wall, or three buried stones projecting above the surface of the ground, all that remains perhaps of some bridge carried away by a deluge, or all that subsists of a vast city consumed in a conflagration.

CHAPTER III.

THE PEOPLE — THE ADMINISTRATION — OPINIONS.

March 22. *The People.*—After all in forming a judgment of the Roman peasantry, the principal trait of their character to consider is their energy, that is to say, their aptitude for violent and dangerous actions. Here are a few anecdotes.

Our friend N——, an athletic man, and brave, and calm, resides in the country at a distance of five or six leagues from this place. He informs us that in his village stabbing is quite frequent; of the three brothers of his servant, one is in the bagnio and two have been assassinated. In the same village two peasants were amusing themselves and jesting with each other; one wore a flower in his button hole, a gift from his mistress, and the other seized it. 'Give me that!' said the lover; the other only laughed. The lover became serious: 'Give me that immediately!' The other laughs again. The lover now attempts to retake it by force, when the other runs off; he pursues him, overtakes him, and plunges a knife in his back, and not only once but twenty times, like a butcher and a maniac. Sanguinary rage is seen in their eyes, and for a moment they lapse back to a state of primitive ferocity.

An officer along with us cites similar instances. Two French soldiers were walking along the banks of the Tiber, and observed a man attempting to drown a dog;

they prevent it and blows follow. The man cries out for help, and the people of the quarter respond; one, an apprentice, buries his knife in the back of the foremost soldier who falls motionless. This soldier possessed the strength and structure of a Hercules, but the blow was so well directed that it reached the heart.

Two other soldiers, in the country, enter a field, and steal some figs, and escape: the proprietor, unable to overtake them, fires at them twice, killing one and breaking the leg of the other. They are genuine savages; they think they have a right to make war on all occasions, and to carry it out to the end.

Our friend N—— attempted in his village to abolish some cruel practices. An ox or a cow is slaughtered there every week; but before they despatch the poor brute, they deliver him over to the children and young of the place, who put out his eyes, kindle a fire under his belly, cut away his lips and slash him like a martyr, and all for the pleasure of seeing him furious;—they love strong emotions. N—— tries to dissuade them from this, and goes in search of a curé, besides appealing to others. In order to touch them to the quick, he gives them positive reasons; he tells them that 'the meat thus heated is not good.' 'What is that to us? we are too poor, and never eat it,' is the reply. One day he encounters a peasant severely beating a donkey, and he begs him to desist, to 'let the poor beast alone.' The peasant responds with the *scherzo*, a hard biting Roman jest, 'I did not know that my donkey had relations in this village.' Such are the effects of a bilious temperament, of acrid passions generated by climate, and of barbarous energy unemployed.

The Marchioness of C—— tells us that she does not reside on her estate, owing to its great loneliness, and because the peasants are too *wicked*. I make her repeat this

term; she insists on it and likewise her husband. A certain shoemaker stabbed a comrade in the back, and after a year at the galleys returned to his village and is now prosperous. Another kicked his wife, big with child, to death. Criminals are condemned to the galleys and often for life, but several times a year the Pope grants an amelioration of sentences; if one has a protector he escapes from a murder with only two or three years of punishment. The bagnio is not a very bad place. The prisoners acquire a trade there, and on returning to their villages are not dishonoured, but rather feared, which is often of utility.

I cite, in connection with this, two traits related to me on the frontiers of Spain. At a bull-fight a pretty Spanish lady observes alongside of her a French lady shielding her eyes with her hand at the aspect of a disembowelled horse trampling on his own entrails. She shrugs her shoulders and exclaims, 'A heart of butter!' A Spanish refugee had assassinated a merchant without getting a spot of blood on his clothes; the judge says to him, 'It seems that you are an expert in murder.' The man haughtily replies, 'And you, do you ever stain your robe with your ink?' Three or four facts like these reveal a stratum of humanity quite unknown to us. In these uncultivated men of an intense imagination, whose feelings are hardened by suffering, the spring within is of terrible power and its action prompt. Modern ideas of humanity, moderation, and justice, are not yet instilled into them so as to modify its power or direct its blows. Such as they were in the middle ages such are they now.

The government has never cared to civilise them; it demands nothing of them but taxes and a confessional ticket: in other matters it abandons them to themselves, and again, sets them an example in its system of favouritism. How can people entertain any ideas of equity when

they see an all-powerful protection exercised against private rights and public interest? An apt proverb of theirs which I modify, says, 'A woman's beauty has more power than a hundred buffaloes.' Near N——s' village stood a forest of great value to the country, and which was about to be felled; a *monsignor* had a hand in the profits, and all the reclamations of our friend were in vain. Seeing criminals pardoned, and the knavery of officials, makes the government appear to them a powerful being to be conciliated, and society as a struggle in which everybody must defend himself. On the other hand, in the matter of religion, their Italian imagination comprehends rites only; to them celestial, like civil powers, are simply redoubtable personages whose anger one escapes through genuflexions and offerings, and nothing more. On passing before a crucifix they cross themselves and mumble a prayer; twenty paces off when Christ is no longer visible, they revert to blasphemy. With such an education one can judge for himself if they possess the sentiment of honour, and if for example, in the matter of a vow, they consider themselves bound by duty. American Indians take pride in tricking and deceiving their enemies; in a similar manner these find it natural to deceive a judge. In war sincerity is a weakness—why should I give arms against myself to one who is armed against me. N——, pistol in hand, protected a cow about to be tortured. In the evening, a few days after, while standing on his door-step, a big stone comes whistling near his head. He springs down, seizes a man and handles him pretty roughly. This man, however, was not the offender. He goes farther on and encounters two brothers; the elder who had thrown the stone, becomes livid, raises his gun at N—— and takes aim. N—— seizing the younger, interposes his body as a shield; the latter in the grip of an athlete, and powerless, grinds his teeth and calls upon his brother

to fire. Just at this moment, N——'s servant appears with a gun, and the two scoundrels take to flight. Our friend makes a complaint before the authorities; four persons attend, one of whom is a priest, and all actual witnesses of the transaction; they swear that they did not see who threw the stone. Thereupon N——, exasperated and compelled to make himself respected and feared in order to live in the village, gives to one of his neighbours who saw nothing, a dollar, and this person designates under oath the man that committed the offence. In Bengal, in the same manner, and with still greater facility, twenty false witnesses appear, for and against, in the same trial.* Neighbours complacently swear in each other's behalf or at so much per oath, the same causes in the two countries producing the same mendacity. In all antiquity, on the judge ceasing to be just, testimony was given not as in the presence of a judge, but as in that of an enemy.

On the other hand, this mendacious people, cruel and violent as savages are at the same time as stoical. When ill or wounded, you see them with a broken leg or with a knife in their bodies, seated perfectly still wrapped up in their mantles and making no complaints, as concentrated and passive as so many suffering brutes; all they do is to regard you with a fixed and melancholy stare.

This is because their daily life is a hard one, and they are accustomed to such penalties; they eat nothing but *polenta*, and wear nothing but rags. Villages are few and far between; distances of several leagues must be traversed in order to reach the fields in which they labour. Emancipate them, however, from this militant condition and this constant strain, and their rich underlying nature, abundantly supplied with well-balanced faculties, appears

* See M. de Valbezen, The English in India.

without effort. They become affectionate when well treated. According to N——, a stranger who acts loyally with them finds them loyal. Duke G——, who organised, and has commanded for thirty years a corps of firemen, cannot say too much in praise of them; he compares them in patience, endurance, courage, and military fidelity to the ancient Romans. His company are conscious of being honourably and justly treated and employed in a manly occupation, and for this reason they give themselves up to him body and soul. One need only look at the heads of the monks and of the peasants in the streets or in the country; intelligence and energy are their peculiar characteristics; it is impossible to escape from the idea that the brain here is ample and that man is complete. Stendhal, a former functionary of the Empire, states that, on Rome and Hamburg becoming French departments, administrative blanks were furnished to these cities, containing minute and complicated instructions for the use of the customs and for statistics; the Hamburgers required six weeks to comprehend them and fill them up, while the Romans required but three days. Sculptors pretend to say that, undressed, their flesh is as firm and healthy as in antiquity, whilst beyond the mountains the muscles are ugly and flabby. You begin to believe, indeed, that these people are the ancient Romans of Papirius Cursor, or citizens of the redoubtable republics of the middle ages, the best endowed of all men, the best qualified to invent and to act, but now sunk and hidden under cowls, rags, and liveries, employing noble faculties in chanting litanies, in intrigue, in begging, and in self-debasement.

Pure water is still discernible in this marsh; when the heart overflows its expansion is admirable; whatever grossness or licentiousness there may be, the same virgin nature which furnished divine expressions to the great masters still glows with enthusiasm and rapture. One of

our friends, a German physician, has a servant, a pretty girl, in love with a certain Francesco who is employed on a railroad at four pauls a day. He has nothing and she has nothing, and they cannot marry, as a hundred crowns are necessary before they can commence housekeeping. He is a worthless fellow, not good-looking, and he regards her indifferently; but she has known him from infancy, and been attached to him for eight years. If she goes three days without seeing him, she loses her appetite; the doctor is obliged to reserve her wages, fearing that she may part with all her money. In other respects she is as pure as she is true: she is strong in the beauty of her feeling and speaks freely of her affection. I question her about Francesco; she smiles and blushes imperceptibly; her face lights up and she seems to be in paradise; no more charming, more graceful object could be contemplated than this spiritual Italian countenance illuminated by a pure, powerful, and self-sacrificing sentiment. She wears her beautiful Roman costume, and her head is encircled with the red Sunday covering. What resources, what *finesse*, what force, what impulses such a soul contains! What a contrast when one thinks of the flushed visages of our peasantry and the allurements of our conceited grisettes!

Here I enter on the delicate question; and with a good will, as we are not orators pre-determined to find political arguments, but naturalists unbiassed and uncommitted, occupied in observing the works and sentiments of man, as we observe the instincts, works, and habits of ants and bees. Are the Romans for Italy or for the Pope? According to my friends, any precise answer to this question is difficult; these people are too ignorant, too much affiliated with the soil, too rooted in their village hatreds and interests to have any opinion on such questions. Nevertheless, one may suppose them to be controlled in this as

in other matters by their imagination and by habit. The Pope, on his last journey amongst them, was received with acclamations, the people being fairly stifled around his carriage; he is aged, and his fine benevolent countenance produces on their ardent uncultivated natures an effect like the statue of a saint; his person, his vestments, seem laden with pardon, and they desire to touch them as they do the statue of St. Peter. Moreover, the government is not oppressive, at least visibly so; its rigours are all for the intelligent, its adversary being the man who reads or who has been educated at a university; the rest are spared. A peasant, indeed, may be imprisoned eight days for eating meat on a fast day, but as he is superstitious he has no desire to fail in such rites. He is again obliged to obtain his confessional certificate; but it is not repugnant to him to relate his affairs in a vivid and violent manner, in a black wooden box; besides there are people in the city who make a business of confession and of communion; these procure certificates and dispose of them at two pauls apiece. In addition to this the direct taxes are light, and feudal rights have been abolished by Cardinal Gonsalvi; there is no conscription; the police are very negligent and tolerate petty infractions of the law, also the license of the streets. If a man stabs his enemy he is soon pardoned; there is no fear of the scaffold, a horrible irremediable affair to Southern imaginations. Finally, the chase is allowed throughout the year, and the privilege of carrying arms costs almost nothing; there are no game preserves save those surrounded by walls. It is easy to do as one pleases on the sole condition of not discussing political subjects, in which nobody takes an interest and which nobody comprehends. Accordingly, since the advent of the Piedmontese there is much discontent amongst the peasantry of the Romagna. The conscription seems to bear hard upon them, and

taxes are heavy; they are annoyed by numberless regulations: for example, they are forbidden to dry their clothes in the streets, and are subject to a rigid police and to imposts for ultramontane countries. Modern life exacts steady labour, numerous sacrifices, activity, close attention, and incessant contrivance; one must will, strive, grow rich, instruct himself, and be enterprising. Such a transformation cannot be effected without trials and opposition. Do you suppose that a man who has lain a-bed for ten years, even in dirty clothes and infested with vermin, will, when obliged to do it, spring up suddenly and contentedly make use of his limbs? He is sure to murmur; he will regret his inertia, and try to get back to his bed, finding his limbs a source of annoyance to him. Give him time, however, make him taste the pleasures of activity, of clean clothes, of plastering up the crannies of his tenement, of putting furniture into it, the fruit of his own labour, and on which no man, whether neighbour or officer, dare put his hand, and then will he be reconciled to property and comforts, and to that freedom of action of which he at first simply felt the inconveniences without comprehending either its advantages or its dignity. Already in the Romagna the mechanics are liberals; in Rome, in 1849, countless shopkeepers and small property holders shouldered their guns and betook themselves to the fortifications and fought bravely. Let the peasantry become proprietors, and they will entertain the same views as the rest. The property that can be given to them is already at hand; before the late events, the regular and secular clergy of the Roman states possessed 535 millions of landed estates, which is double the amount of that of the end of the last century,* and double that of the

* Finances Pontificales, by Marquis Pepoli. In 1797 the amount was but 217 millions.

French clergy at the present time; the Italian government might dispose of these estates as it is already doing in the rest of Italy. This is the great lever to move. Like the French peasant after 1789 the Roman peasant will devote himself to cultivating, improving, grading, widening, and extending his grounds; he will economise in order to ascend higher on the social ladder; he will put his son to legal pursuits, marry his daughter to an *employé*, and live on his income; he will learn to calculate and to read; he will keep the code on his bookshelves, subscribe to a newspaper, invest in stocks, paint and repair his domicile, and fill it with old furniture from the city. Open a dam and the water flows at once; render comforts and acquisition possible, and people soon desire to possess and enjoy. And, especially, do not forget prisons for robbery and scaffolds for assassins, for with strict and impartial justice man immediately comprehends that only prudent gain is honest gain, and he walks along inoffensive, useful, and protected on the straight road within the barriers of the law.

CHAPTER IV.

THE GOVERNMENT, ITS SUPPORT AND ITS INSTINCTS.

March 23. *The Government.*—I do not assume to look very far ahead. Politics is not my forte, and especially the politics of the future; it is too complicated a science: besides, in order to give basis to a judgment serious study is necessary, and a much longer residence in the country. Let me speak of that which is visible to all, for example, the government.

Nobody talks about anything else. I have not conversed with an Italian that did not immediately enter on the subject of politics. It is their passion; they themselves admit that for fifty years past poetry, literature, science, history, philosophy, religion, all intellectual occupations and works have yielded to its supremacy. Take up a tragedy or a metaphysical tract, and seek the intention of its author and it will be found to be to preach a republic, a monarchy, a confederation or a union.

They say that the French occupation of Rome has rendered the government worse than ever. Formerly it acted cautiously, stopping half-way in a course of injustice; nowadays, supported by a garrison of eighteen thousand men, it no longer fears the discontented. Accordingly, nobody doubts that the day the French leave will be the last of papal sovereignty. I try to have the limits and extent of this oppression clearly defined. It

is not violent and atrocious like that of the kings of Naples; in the South the former Spanish tyranny bequeathed habits of cruelty—there is nothing of the kind in Rome. Here they do not seize a man without warning, in order to incarcerate him in a dungeon and torture him and render him insensible every morning by dashing ice-water on his body. If he is liberal and in ill favour the police make a descent on his house, break open his drawers, seize his papers and carry him off. At the expiration of five or six days he is interrogated by a sort of justice of the peace; other examinations follow, the records of which form a file that is submitted after long delays to judges properly so called. These study the matter quite as long; one man perhaps may be held on accusation three and another six months. The trial then comes on; it is said to be a public one, but it is not; the public remains outside the door, only three or four spectators being admitted, who are well known and reliable persons, and who are provided with tickets of admission. Again, the police avail themselves of accidents. Fifteen days ago two persons were assassinated in their carriage at seven o'clock in the evening a few paces off the Corso, and robbed of ten thousand piastres; the police, unable to find the villains, take advantage of the opportunity to lock up a few liberals provisionally. All the world is familiar with a recent trial the evidence of which was suppressed by the Roman authorities. The principal witness was a prostitute who denounced not only those who visited her, but others that never saw her. A certain young man is implicated; he is arrested at night, tried secretly and condemned to five years' imprisonment. He solemnly assured his brother in a confidential interview that he was innocent.—The laws are passable, but arbitrary power perverts them, introducing itself into penalties as well as into pardons; no person can depend on obtaining

justice, no one will consent to be a witness, nobody is averse to stabbing, or thinks himself safe from denunciation, nobody is sure of sleeping in his own bed and room one day after another.

In respect to money nobody has to fear confiscation; this is replaced by annoyances. Marquis A—— possesses a large estate near Orvieto on which his ancestors founded a village. The people of the place, authorised by a special *monsignore* decree a tax on real estate which must be paid by the Marquis A——. Authorised by the same *monsignore* they commence legal proceedings against him respecting a certain plot of ground; if they gain the cause he pays its costs; if they lose it he still pays, for, the soil belonging to him, his property must provide for the expenses of the commune. A man has to be a friend of the government in order to enjoy his income; if not he runs the risk of deaf ears amongst his tenantry. It is by thousands of petty personal liens like these that the government holds and maintains its proprietors and nobility.

The members of the *mezzo ceto,* such as lawyers, physicians, etc., are similarly fettered; their professions make them dependent on this immense papalistic coterie; if they were to show themselves liberal they would lose the best of their practice. Beside this, the establishments of public instruction are all in the hands of the clergy; Rome has not a single lay college or boarding-school. Finally, sum up the dependants, beggars, clerks, and sinecurists, actual or prospective, all of whom are obedient and demonstrate their zeal; their daily bread depends on their fidelity. Behold, thus, a hierarchy consisting of curbed and prudent people, who smile with a discreet air and applaud at will. Count C——remarked, 'It is the same here as in China; the feet are not cruelly amputated, but

they are so effectually twisted and deformed under their bandages that people are incapable of walking.'

Any other result is impossible—and here we have to admire the logic of things. An ecclesiastical government cannot be liberal. An ecclesiastic may be so; he frequents society, the positive sciences crowd on him, lay interests interfere to divert the native bent of his thoughts; deprive him, however, of these influences, abandon him to himself, surround him with other priests, and place the reins of power in his hands, and he will revert back as did Pius VII. and Pius IX. to the maxims of his office, and follow the invincible tendency of his profession. Being a priest, and especially pope, he possesses truth, absolute and complete. He is not obliged, as we are, to seek it in the accumulated judgments and future discoveries of all men; it centres in him and in his predecessors. Principles are founded on tradition, proclaimed in papal briefs, renewedin encyclical letters, detailed in theological summaries, and applied in their minutest details according to the prescriptions of canonists, and the discussions of casuists. There is no human idea or action, public or private, which is not defined, classified, and qualified in the ponderous folios of which he is the defender and inheritor. Moreover this knowledge is a living science; once received into his mind and duly promulgated all doubts must cease. God decides in him and through him; contradiction is rebellion and rebellion sacrilege. The first of all duties therefore in his eyes is obedience; investigation, private judgment, a self-suggesting capacity, are sinful. Man must allow himself to be led, he must abandon himself like an infant; his reason and will no longer reside in him but in another delegated for this trust from on high; he has in short a *director*. This, in fact, is the true name of a Catholic priest, and this the object and end of the government of Rome. Bearing this title it may be

indulgent, and render slight services; it may pardon man's weaknesses, humour worldly temptations, and tolerate divergencies; violence is repugnant to it, and especially open violence; it loves unctuous terms and indulgent proceedings; it never threatens, but advises and admonishes. It casts over sinners like a rich wadded mantle the amplitude of its affectionate periods; it willingly enlarges on its merciful heart and on its paternal instincts; never however swerving in the one particular of requiring submission both of mind and heart. Having thus secured obedience, it emerges from the theological domain and enters that of private life; it decides on vocations, supervises marriages, chooses professions, controls promotions, rules testamentary decisions and the like.

Consequently it takes especial care in public matters to guard people against the perilous temptations of action. In Rome, for instance, it nominates municipal councillors who, to complete their board, enjoy the right of nominating others; these, however, must be approved of by the Pope, all, in fact, holding their seats according to his will. The same course is followed in other departments; a *monsignore* presides over hospitals, a *monsignore* superintends theatres, and regulates the length of a dancer's petticoats. As to the administrative department, things go on to as great an extent as possible in the old beaten track. Political economy is a dangerous science, a modern one and too closely associated with material benefits. Taxes are kept or imposed on the most fruitful products without a thought of the wide-spread and invisible impoverishment of the country produced by the reaction.* Every time a horse is sold he is taxed five per cent. Cattle at pasture pay also, and besides this twenty-eight

* Marquis Pepoli, Finances Pontificales. See also the Memoirs of Cardinal Gonsalvi.

francs a head in the market, which is from twenty to thirty per cent. of their value; fish pay eighteen per cent. of the price at which they are sold; and grain, produced in the *agro romano*, about twenty-two per cent. Add to this an income tax which is not light; I know a fortune of thirty-three thousand crowns per annum, which pays a tax of from five to six thousand crowns. Besides, they borrow. All this belongs to the traditional practices of the *luoghi di monte*, to the financial principles of the last two centuries. The object is to live, and they live from day to day; they take particular care not to disturb the established order of things; innovations are horrible to old people alarmed at the modern spirit. A friend, who has travelled in Mexico, said to the Pope, 'Your Holiness, sustain the new emperor; direct the Mexican clergy to conform to the new order of things, otherwise, the empire will fall: American Protestants will invade it, and colonise it, and a vast country will be lost to the Catholic faith.' The Pope seemed to comprehend this, and yet the insurmountable weight of tradition has just publicly armed him against the only establishment capable of prolonging the existence in North America of the religion of which he is the sovereign head.

To subsist, impede, withhold, preserve, delay, and extinguish, is, in short, the nature of this mind; if you seek for any other distinct trait still does the ecclesiastical spirit furnish it. A priest is committed to celibacy, and for this reason he is more concerned with sins against chastity than with all others. In our laic morality the first principle is honour, that is to say, the obligation to be courageous and true; here all morality revolves around the idea of sex; to maintain the mind in primitive purity and ignorance is the main object, or at least to abstract it from sensuality by mortification and abstinence, or, at all events, to avoid visible scandal. On this point the

police regulations are rigid; women are not allowed in the street at night; matters are conducted clandestinely, and the French commandant and the special *monsignore* frequently exchange polite notes. External decency is maintained at all price,—and at such a price! Lately a poor young girl, who had an intrigue, was arrested and imprisoned in a penitentiary, and, as she was informed, for life. 'Is there no means of being discharged?' she inquires. 'Yes,' is the reply, 'if you can find some one to marry you.' She sends for an old rogue who had once paid his court to her fruitlessly; the rogue espouses her, and a month afterwards turns her to profit in the usual manner. Appearances, however, are saved.—One of my friends tells me of a young girl, seduced by a mechanic, and who desired, above all things, to suckle her child herself; a *curé* sends some *gendarmes,* takes the child by main force, and places it in a foundling hospital.—The *curé* has a right to interfere in all your affairs: he can prevent you from keeping a female servant if you are not married; if he suspects an intrigue he can forbid you from visiting ladies single or married; he can expel women from his parish whose conduct seems to him doubtful; he can demand of the cardinal-vicar the exile of an actress or of a *danseuse*; he has gendarmes subject to his orders, and is only responsible to the cardinal-vicar.—A Roman cannot possibly live in Rome if he does not stand well with his *curé*; a passport or a permit to hunt is not obtainable without the *curé's* certificate; he has his eye on your habits, opinions, conversations, and studies, the police, in short, being on your track on all sides. To avoid show, to spread a varnish of propriety over life, to secure the observance of rites, to remain uncontradicted, to rest undisturbed in old uncontested ways, to be absolute in the world of intellect and business through the ascendency of habit and of imagination, is the end and aim of priestly pretension;

one readily perceives how such an ambition proceeds not from a temporary situation but from the very essence of institutions and character. A temporal government in the hands of ecclesiastics cannot be otherwise; it develops into a mild, petty, listless, respectable, monkish invincible despotism just as any plant develops into its flower.

CHAPTER V.

RELIGION—THE 'UNITA CATTOLICA'—BOOKS—OBSERVANCES—THE COUNTRY—ARICCIA—GENZANO—ALBANO—SCENERY.

I READ the 'Unita Cattolica' every morning with much pleasure. It is an instructive paper; one sees clearly the sentiments that are called religious and catholic in Italy.

One of the liberal journals proposed that Italian ladies should send their rings to Garibaldi on his fête day;—what an insult to St. Joseph, who is, unfortunately, this bandit's patron saint! As an offset to this the 'Unita' recommends the ladies to send their rings to the Pope, because he is the head of the Church, the Church mystically embodying a character which ought to be dear to all women, that of maternity;—this argument is irresistible. Another journal calls the Pope 'the great mendicant' (*il gran mendico*).—For a month past I have read over the lists of donations placed on the top of the first page. There are quite a number of them. It is estimated that the Pope annually receives 2,000,000 piastres from this source. Generally, they are given in return for some favour received or expected, and not alone spiritual favours but temporal; the donators in sending their offerings entreat the blessing of the Holy Father on 'some affair of great importance.'* One perceives that he is

* March 23—Marchioness Giulia. . . . presents to the Holy Father a gold ring with an *ex-voto* in order to obtain a special grace from St. Joseph.'

regarded as a person of influence, a sort of prime minister at the court of God. Frequently, his hierarchical position is distinctly marked; the supplicant recommends himself first through Jesus Christ to God the Father, next through the Virgin or some saint to Jesus Christ, and finally through the Pope to the saints, the Virgin and Jesus Christ. These form the three degrees of celestial jurisdiction; the Pope seems to them to be the delegate of the sovereigns of the other world, with full powers to govern this one, all communications to be made through him, and he to endorse all demands. An Italian bigot still cherishes the ideas which Luther found prevalent three centuries ago; he specifies and humanises all his religious conceptions; in his eyes God is a king, as in every monarchy, and access to him is only attainable through his ministers, and especially through his relatives, companions, and domestics.

In this way the Virgin becomes of immense consequence;* she is in reality the third person of the Trinity, and replaces the Holy Ghost, who, without corporeal form, escapes popular apprehension. To those who cannot imagine

March 26—'A son praying for the recovery of his mother offers the Holy Father ten francs, and ten francs more to the Madonna of Spoleto in order to obtain the grace demanded.'

* Saint Liguori, edition of the Benedictines of Solesmes. 1834, Vol. I. p. 495.

'Would you know what passes in heaven? The Holy Virgin stands before her divine Son, and shows him the body in which she bore him for nine months, and her sacred bosom from which she so often nourished him. The Son stands before the Almighty Father, and shows him his open side, and the sacred wounds which he received in our behalf. At the sight of these sweet evidences of the love of his Son, God can refuse him nothing, and we obtain everything.

St. Liguori is the best accredited casuist of modern times; he has besides written various spiritual treatises. I beg the reader to read his *Regulation of a Christian Life*, his *Spiritual Policy*, his *Glories of Mary*, and his *Dogmatic Theology*, the chapter *De Matrimonio*, and *De Restitutione*, liv. iii., dubium vi., articulus iv.

celestial powers without faces, whose could be more attractive and more merciful than a woman's? And who, with so good a Son, cau be more potent and more esteemed than a woman so beloved? I have just glanced over the pages of 'La Vergine,' a collection of articles in prose and verse, published weekly, in honour of the Virgin Mary. The first article relates to the visit of the Virgin to Elizabeth, and the probable time the visit lasted; at the end is a sonnet on the Angel who, finding the Virgin so charming, found it difficult to leave her to return to heaven. I have not the text at hand, but I can vouch for its sense, and this journal lies on every one's table.—I have just purchased a book which I have been recommended to read, called 'Il Mese di Maria,' largely in circulation and which indicates the tone of devotion in Rome. It contains lessons for every day of the month of May, accompanied with prayers and services called 'flowers,' 'garlands,' and 'spiritual crowns.' Who can doubt that the Blessed Virgin, so generous, and magnanimous, will not, with so many crowns of glory at her disposal, reserve one for him who with unceasing constancy devotes himself to offering these crowns to her?' Here follow some lines and about thirty stories in support of the theory. A young person named Esquilio, only twelve years of age, led a very wicked and corrupt life. God, who wished to restore him to Himself, caused him to fall dangerously ill, so that despairing of his life, he hourly expected death. As he had lost all consciousness, and was supposed to be dead, he was taken into an apartment filled with fire; seeking to avoid the flames, he saw a door through which he passed, and following the passage, entered a hall in which he found the Queen of Heaven, with innumerable saints who served as her retinue. Esquilio immediately prostrated himself at her feet; but regarding him coldly, she repelled him far from her, and commanded him to be con-

ducted back into the flames. The miserable youth implored the saints in his behalf, and to these Mary made answer, that Esquilio was a very wicked sinner, never having even repeated an Ave Maria. The saints again interposed, declaring that he had entirely reformed; Esquilio, meanwhile, full of terror, promises to surrender himself wholly to the Holy Ghost, and be true to it as long as he should live. Then the Virgin, administering a severe reprimand, exhorts him to ensure the redemption of his sins by penitence, and to keep his promise; after which she revoked the order which she had given to cast him into the flames.—Two young persons are taking a pleasure sail on the River Po; one of them repeats the service of the Madonna, and the other refuses, stating that he now has a holiday. The boat capsizes, and both invoke the Virgin; she appears, and taking the hand of the former, says to the latter, 'Since you do not think yourself obligated to honour me, I am not obligated to save you,' and he is drowned.—A young libertine had abstracted a pen used to register the names of believers admitted into the congregation of Mary; he makes use of the pen to inscribe a billet-doux, and receives a slap on his cheek without seeing the hand that gave it, accompanied with these words, 'Sinner, hast thou the audacity to pollute an instrument sacred to me?' He falls to the ground, and his cheek remains sore for several days.—I pass others equally remarkable. Such are the narratives that nourish the minds of the women, and even of ladies of rank. They are told that when St. Theresa was interrupted in writing a letter, and got up to go into the garden, Jesus Christ came and finished it for her. Their husbands have received similar education, and an impression stamped in by education is never effaced. I have seen some quite cultivated men who found nothing to reprehend in these books and narratives. More-

over, many who seemed to be enlightened, simply follow the crowd. You express your surprise; at first they reply that 'we are compelled to it;' after a little intimacy they add, 'It does no harm, and may possibly do good. In case the priest enforce it, one may be on his guard.' Yesterday one of my friends smiled on learning that a lady of the company had departed on a journey to visit a Madonna whose eyes moved. A young officer present assumes a serious air, and tells him that he, with eight of his friends, had also made the journey, and they could testify that the eyes moved. One may go very far on this road. Countess N—— has two children, one of whom is placed under the protection of Notre Dame de Spoleto, and the other under Notre Dame de Vivalcaro, both of whom to her are two entirely different personages. In the vehement, positive imaginations of these people, a statue is not a symbol, but a living goddess. Finally, getting to have more confidence in Notre Dame de Vivalcaro she places both her children under her sole protection.

You may imagine from the foregoing the nature of the religion of the people. A coachman, employed by one of my friends, is run away with on descending the Pincio; he finds it impossible to stop the horses, and the first Madonna he sees he makes a vow. One of the horses cracks his skull against a wall, while the coachman is thrown upon a grated window, where he clings to the bars and escapes with a few scratches. He has two pictures painted in the shape of an *ex-voto,* one of which represents him at the moment of making his vow, and the other when thrown against the grating.—A *femme de chambre* of the Countess N——, took tickets in a lottery relying upon the protection of three saints; she lost, and since that time no longer implores saints who have treated her so badly.—Minds of this class are so

vividly impressed, they even invent superstitions outside of the official calendar; for example, N——'s servant, a female, assures us that the Pope is *jettatore*; if he is well and able to bestow the benediction at Easter, it will rain; if he should be ill, the weather will be fine.—Ritual instruction and catechisms naturally operate in the same sense. I entered a church one day and saw a priest engaged in instructing forty little girls of about seven or eight years of age: they looked about inquisitively with sparkling eyes, all whispering together like tiny little mice, and their roguish animated little heads in constant motion. With a mild paternal aspect he went from bench to bench, restraining his excited little flock with his hand, always repeating the word *il diavolo*. 'Be careful of the devil, my dear little children, the devil who is so wicked, the devil who devours your souls,' etc. Fifteen or twenty years from this, this word will surely arise in their minds, and along with it the horrible mouth, the sharp claws of the image, the burning flames, and so on. An attendant at the church of Aracœli states, that during Lent the sermons turned entirely on fasting, and on forbidden or permitted dishes; the preacher gesticulates and walks about on a platform describing hell, and, immediately after, the various ways of preparing macaroni and codfish which are so numerous as to render flesh-eating gourmands quite inexcusable. Within a few days a sausage vender on the Corso arranged his hams in the shape of a sepulchre; above it were lights and garlands, and in the interior a glass globe filled with gold-fishes.—The principle is to appeal to the senses. Unlike the German or Englishman, the Italian is not open to pure ideas; he involuntarily incorporates them in palpable form; the vague and abstract escape or repel him; the structure of his mind imposes definite forms on his conception, a strong relief, and

this constant invasion of precise imagery, which formerly shaped his art, now shapes his religion.

It is necessary to maintain this point of view, which is that of naturalists: all irritability disappears, the mind is tranquillised; one sees around him nothing but cause and effect; explained phenomena lose their repulsiveness,—at all events one ceases to dwell on them in contemplating productive forces which, like all natural forces, are in themselves innocent, whether employed for good or for evil. Even wrongs and violence are interesting; one feels the curiosity of the physicist, who, as a student of electricity, comprehends a storm and forgets his damaged garden in verifying the exactness of laws by which he is prevented from eating a dessert of fruit. No three days pass that I do not read in the newspapers some terrific declamation against two celebrated authors of our day, one so brilliant, amiable, and lively, so French and so *spirituel*, that you forget to note his good sense, which is equal to his wit; and the other, so broad and delicate, so rich in general ideas, so refined and so practical in the art of feeling and distinguishing delicate shades, so happily endowed, and so well instructed, that philosophy and erudition, the highest generalised conceptions, and the minutest literal philology are as Hebrew to him; in brief, M. About, the author of 'La Question Romaine,' and M. Renan, the author of 'La Vie de Jésus.' Every three days they are declared to be the wickedest of sinners: one article that I have read entitled 'Renan e il diavolo,' would prove that resemblances between these two personages are frequent. Nothing is more natural; things passing through certain minds assume a certain colour; the laws of mental refraction require it, and they are not less powerful than those of physical refraction. A few days ago I witnessed a similar effect at the Capitol, relating to history such as it becomes after being elaborated, deformed, and expanded

in the popular brain. Two French soldiers, contemplating a Judith about to kill Holofernes, one says to the other, 'You see that woman there? Well she is called Charlotte Corday, and that other is Marat, a man that kept her, and whom she assassinated in a bath tub. I must say those kept women are *canaille*!'

March 28. *The Country.*—We set out for Albano at eight o'clock in the morning, leaving Rome by the Plazza San Giovanni. It is the most beautiful in Rome; I have already described it to you; but I find it still more beautiful than before. After passing the gate you turn back to look and you have before you that façade of St. John Lateran which at the first glance seems exaggerated; at this early hour, however, in this grand silence, and amidst so many ruins and rural objects, it is no longer so; you find it as rich as it is imposing, the sun clothing its lofty groups of columns, its assembly of statues and solid gilded walls with the magnificence of a fête and the splendour of a triumph.

Hedges are becoming green and the elms are budding, while at intervals a rosy peach or apricot tree looks as lustrous as a ball dress. The grand cupola of the sky is flooded with light. On the left the aqueduct of Sextus V., and then the ruined Claudian aqueduct, extend their long arcades across the plain, their arches defining themselves with extraordinary clearness in the transparent atmosphere. Three planes compose the landscape: a green plane illuminated with a shower of ardent rays; the grave immutable line of aqueduct; and beyond, the mountains in a delicate golden blue haze. Flocks of goats and long-horned cattle appear in the hollows and on the heights, conical roofs of shepherds' huts similar to the huts of savages, some herdsmen, their legs swathed in goats' skins and here and there, as far as the eye can see, some ruin of an antique villa, or tomb crumbling away at its

base, or column crowned with ivy, the scattered remains, apparently, of an immense city swept away by a deluge. Peasants with bright eyes and sallow complexions are striding across the fields to save steps. The relay-house is a tottering tenement, rusty and leprous, a sort of quiet tomb where two men are stretched out wasting with fever.

You reach Ariccia by a superb bridge built by the Pope, the lofty arcades of which traverse a valley. B——, who has travelled over the Roman States, says that works of art are not scarce and that the main roads are in excellent condition. Architecture and constructions constitute the pleasure of aged sovereigns. The self-love that impels a Pope to erect a church or a palace, to inscribe his name and family arms on all restorations and embellishments, leads him to undertake important works like these that offer such a contrast to the general negligence surrounding them. Other evidences also indicate the presence of princely taste and of great aristocratic property. Some duke has planted broad avenues of elms stretching off a long distance beyond the village. The village itself belongs to Prince Chigi; his villa at the end of the hedge so dark and time-worn, looks like a fortified castle. Below the bridge, his park spreads out covering the valley and extending up to the mountains. Distorted old trees and monstrous trunks creviced by age, and the ilex in all the splendour of its eternal youth dot the soil refreshed by the running streams. Grey and mossy tree tops everywhere commingle with green ones; the bushes are already putting on their tender green, which, absent in some places, suggests to the mind a light veil caught up and withheld by the thorny fingers of surrounding branches. All these tints and tones, all these alternations of light and shadow, blend together with a charming variety and harmony. The spring soil has become mellow and fruitful; one is vaguely conscious of the incuba-

tion of the living multitude that teem within its depths: frail sprouts peep through the bark; green specks glisten in the air traversed and peopled by the flitting rays; flowers in brilliant attire already cluster together and capriciously deck the banks of the streams. What are marbles and monuments by the side of the beauties of nature!

We dine at Genzano and are obliged to purchase our meat ourselves, our host refusing to compromise himself. He informs us, however, where we may find a sausage shop. The inn here is a rude affair, a sort of stable supported by a wide arcade. Mules and asses pass in and out alongside the table, their hoofs clattering on the pavement. Cobwebs hang to the black beams, while the light enters from without in one great mass, filled with the swimming specks of dust within. There is no chimney; our hostess cooks on a slab, the smoke from which diffuses itself throughout the apartment; the doors, however, front and rear, are open and afford us a current of air. I imagine that Don Quixote, three hundred years ago, must have found just such inns on the burning plains of La Mancha. Our chairs consist of wooden benches and our fare of eggs over and over again. Beggars stick to us with incredible importunity, following us even to our table. It is impossible to describe their rags and filthiness. One of them wears torn trowsers exposing both thighs hung round with tatters, while an old woman has on her head, in the shape of a hood, a dishclout which seems to have been used by a regiment for a foot mat. The side streets are the strangest of dirty holes, filled alternately with sharp stones and piles of ordure. The town, however, possesses some fine structures, apparently of ancient date. My friends tell me that there are villages in the mountains, built in the fifteenth century, and so well built that three hundred years of decadence have

not sufficed to impair or destroy the work of primitive prosperity.

We visited Lake Nemi, which is a cup of water lying at the bottom of a basin of mountains. It is not at all grand, any more than the Tiber; its name constitutes its glory. The mountains that surround it have lost their forests; alone on the shores of the lake, huge platanes clinging to the rocks by their roots, display themselves half-reclining upon the water; shapeless, crooked, gnarled old trunks reach out their white branches and dip them in the grey rippling surface; not far off is a murmuring cluster of reeds; periwinkles and anemones abound among the moss-covered roots, and through a labyrinth of branches appear the far slopes of the lake rendered blue by distance. A name, the ancient name of the lake, rises spontaneously to the lips, *Speculum Dianæ,* and one imagines it as it appeared in centuries of militant energy and sanguinary rites, encircled by vast dark forests, its silent shores deserted except when disturbed by belling stags or the thirsty deer that came to drink there; the hunter, the mountaineer, who, from his crag, obtained glimpses of its motionless sombre gloss, felt his flesh crawl as if detected there by the bright fixed eye of the goddess on him; at the bottom of the gorge, under the eternal pines and inviolate sanctity of time-worn oaks the lake shone tragic and chaste, and its metallic waves with its steel reflections formed the 'Mirror of Diana.'

On returning, after having mounted the sinuous back of the hill, the sea comes in sight flashing like a surface of molten silver. The interminable plain, faintly chequered with cultivation, extends as far as the shore, and there stops encircled by this luminous band. Then the eye follows avenues of aged oaks, between which are scattered clumps of box and the always bright little populace of verdant shrubs; one never tires of this immortal

summer on which winter never lays his hand. All at once, beneath your feet, you see from the brow of a hill Lake Albano, a grand cup of blue water like that of Nemi, but wider and with more beautiful banks. In front, and above the heights which form the cup, rises Monte Cavi, wild and red like an antediluvian monster, akin to the Alps and Pyrenees, the sole rugged eminence in the midst of mountains that seem designed by architects, quaintly capped with its monastery, sometimes sombre under cloud shadows, sometimes suddenly lit up by rays of sunshine and smiling with wild gaiety;—a little below it is Rocca di Papa, terraced on the side of a neighbouring mountain, white like a line of battlements, its trenchant lines of overhanging houses cutting the threatening stormy sky;—beneath is the lake far down in its leaden-hued crater, motionless and glittering like a plate of polished steel, here and there roughened by the breeze with imperceptible scales, strangely tranquil, slumbering with profound mysteriousness under the silent tremor passing over it, and reflecting the indented margin and the rich crown of oaks eternally nourished by its freshness.—You raise your eyes and on the left is Castel-Gandolfo with its white houses, its round dome relieving on the sky, and sharp points bristling along the lengthened ridge of the mountain like white scales on a crocodile's back, and finally in the remote background, above the crags of the mountains the boundless Roman campagna, with millions of spots and lines, drowned in a sea of mist and light.

A Carthusian convent stands on the bank of the lake. Monks always choose their sites with remarkable taste, and a singularly noble poetic feeling. Perhaps the religious life, deprived of ordinary comforts, emancipates the soul from commonplace cares; at all events such was the case formerly. Unfortunately, the horrible and the gross quickly establish themselves alongside of the noble.

At the entrance is a grating, and behind this a quantity of skulls and bones of Carthusians, ornamented with appropriate inscriptions. Figure to yourself the effect of all this on the imagination of a passing peasant. The head and the heart are both impressed, and the impression lasts for several hours.—Everything here is calculated to produce this sort of impression, for example, the service in St. Peter's. The high altar is such a distance off that the assembly do not hear the words—I do not say comprehend, for they are Latin; this is of little moment, the effect of the majestic reverberation on the ear, and the glitter of gold vestments, and the imposing architecture, amply suffice to excite commotion in the breast, and keep a man in a kneeling posture.

CHAPTER VI.

STATE OF MINDS—CONJECTURES ON THE FUTURE OF CATHOLICISM.

March 26.—This evening a political discussion takes place, always the case at the end of a dessert after your coffee. On returning home I transcribed it.

The principal interlocutor is a grave, handsome, young Italian, whose language is so distinct and harmonious that one might almost call it music. He is very animated on the question of the temporal power of the Pope, and to which I oppose some clerical arguments. 'You judge the Pope,' I remark, 'you are losing your docility of mind and heart, and are becoming Protestant.'

'By no means. We are Catholics, and will continue so; we accept and maintain a superior authority on all matters of faith. We do not even deprive him of temporal power; you cannot deprive people of what they have not, the Pope, in fact, no longer possessing it. If, for the past thirty years the Pope has ruled, it has been through Austrian or French bayonets; never will he be more subject to foreign pressure than he is at this moment. We have no desire to depose him, but to regulate a deposition already accomplished.

I resume, and urge the following. 'The principle of Catholicism is not alone a unity of faith, but a unity of the Church. Now, if the Pope becomes the citizen of a particular state, whether Italian, French, Austrian, or

Spanish, it is quite probable, that at the end of a century or two he will fall under the control of the government whose subject or guest he may happen to be, as formerly the Pope at Avignon under the King of France. Then, through jealousy or the necessity of independence, other states will create anti-popes, or at least distinct patriarchs like those of St. Petersburg or Constantinople, and schisms will arise, and you will no longer have a Catholic Church.—You will also cease to have an independent Church. A patriarch or pope subject to a prince becomes a functionary. This you now see at St. Petersburg; such was the state of things in France under Philippe le Bel and Philippe VI.; when Napoleon tried to establish the Pope at Paris, his object was to make him a minister of public worship highly honoured, but a very obedient one. Remark this, that the European governments, especially the French, interfere in everything, what will it be if they add an interference with conscience? Liberty will perish, and Europe will become a Russia, a Roman empire, or a China.—Finally, religious dogma is in danger. To remove the Pope from the country, as you would transplant a root from a hothouse, is to deliver him over with all dogma to the action of modern principles. Catholicism being infallible is immutable; its chief requires a dead country, subjects who do not think, a city of convents, museums, ruins, a tranquil poetic necropolis. Imagine an academy of sciences here, public lectures, legislative discussions, flourishing manufactories, a stirring universal promulgation of laic morality and philosophy, do you suppose that the contagion would not extend to and embrace theology? It would embrace it, and gradually temper it; dogmas would be interpreted, and the most objectionable ones dropped; they would cease to be spoken of. Look at France, so well disciplined and so obedient in the time of Bossuet; simply through contact

with a reflecting society Catholicism became moderate; it cast off Italian traditions, questioned the Council of Trent, modified the adoration of images, allied itself to philosophy, and submitted to the ascendency of learned and rational, but believing laymen. What would become of the papacy amidst the license, the discoveries, and the seductions of contemporary civilisation. To displace or dethrone the Pope would in two centuries transform the faith.'

He replies: 'So much the better. Alongside of superstitious Catholics there are true Catholics, to which class we belong; let the Church reform and metamorphose itself wisely, slowly, in contact with modern conceptions, and that is all we want. As to schisms, they threaten a protected Pope as much as a Pope dispossessed; the power that keeps a garrison in Rome influences him to as great an extent as any potentate of whom he might be the subject or guest. If any plan exists guaranteeing his independence it is ours; we will assign to him the right bank of the Tiber, St. Peter's, and Civita-Vecchia; he can live by himself in a little oasis surrounded by a guard of honour, and supported by contributions from Catholic states, enjoying the respect and protection of all Europe. As to the dangers of combining spiritual and temporal power in the hands of any one prince, allow me to state that such is the case in Protestant countries, for instance, in England and that these countries are no less free. The conjunction of these two forces does not always produce servitude; it consolidates it in some countries and does not implant it in others. Meanwhile allow us to repel it from ours where it establishes it. If there is peril in our plan it is for ourselves and not for the Pope. Placed in the very heart of Italy, and irritated, he will become revolutionary and excite the people against us. But since we accept the danger leave to us all its hazards,

and do not impose on us a régime which you reject for yourselves.'

'What, then, is the nature of this transformation of the Catholic Church of which you have a glimpse in the obscurity of the future?'—Replies to this query are vague. My interlocutors assert that the upper class of Italian clergy contains a respectable body of liberals, even among the cardinals and especially outside of Rome. Among others they cite Dom Luigi Tosti, whose works I am acquainted with. This person is a Benedictine of Monte Cassino, very pious and liberal, a reader of modern philosophers, a student of the new exegesis, versed in history, and fond of speculation in higher regions, possessing a broad, conciliating, and generous mind, and whose rich poetic seductive eloquence is that of a Catholic George Sand. The clergy here is not as in France so wholly under military discipline; only in France has the contagion of administrative rule spread into the Church.* Certain ecclesiastics in Italy occupy semi-independent positions; Dom Tosti in his cloister is like an Oxford professor in his fellowship; he is at liberty to travel, read, think, and publish as he pleases. His aim is to place the Church in harmony with scientific development. Science, in his view of it, being simply decomposing, is not the only course: there is another as sure, the *atto sintetico*, an absorbing inspiration, a faith and natural enthusiasm by which the soul, unreasoning and unanalysing, discovers and comprehends, first God, and afterwards Christ. That ardent generous faith, through which we embrace beauty, goodness, and truth, in themselves and at their source, is alone capable of binding men together in a fraternal community and of pushing them on to noble deeds, devotion, and sacrifice. Now this community is the Catholic

* 'Mon Clergé est comme un régiment, il doit marcher, et il marche.' Discourse of Cardinal de Bonnechose in the senate, session of 1865.

Church; and therefore while maintaining its Gospel immutable it must accommodate itself to the variations of civil society; it is able to do this since it contains in its bosom "an inexhaustible variety of forms." She is about to undergo a metamorphosis of this kind, but she will remain, in conformity with the essence of her being, "the mistress of morals."—What this metamorphosis is the foregoing does not define, and Father Tosti himself declares it to be a secret in the hands of God.'*

Hereupon Count N——, who has a shrewd penetrating Italian intellect, and whom I am beginning to understand and to love, withdrew me into an obscure corner. 'These young people,' he remarks to me, 'are entering on the domain of poetry; we will leave it. For the present put sympathy, patriotism, bitterness, and hopes to one side; let us consider Catholicism as a fact, and endeavour to estimate the forces which sustain it, and see in what sense and within what limits modern civilisation counteracts or reflects its action.' Thus stated, the question becomes a purely mechanical, moral, problem, and the following, in our view of it, are some conjectures, which one arrives at on this ground.

The first of these forces is the supremacy of *rites.* Every savage and child, every uncultured mind, dull or imaginative, feels the need of constructing for itself a fetich, that is to say, of worshipping the sign instead of what it signifies; they adapt their religion to their intelligence, and unable to comprehend simple ideas or incorporeal sentiments, consecrate palpable objects and a visible ceremony. Such was religion in the middle ages; such is it still almost intact among Sabine shepherds and the peasants of Britanny. To them the finger of St. Ives, the cowl of St. Francis, a statue of St. Anne or of the

* Prolegomeni alla storia universale della Chiesa.

Madonna in a new embroidered dress is God; a neuvaine, a fast, beads faithfully counted, a medal reverently kissed, is piety. One degree higher a local saint, the Virgin, angels, the fears and hopes these excite, constitute religion. Two degrees higher the priest is regarded as a superior being, the depository of the Divine will and the dispenser of celestial grace. In Protestant countries all this has been done away with by the reformation of Luther; it exists, modified, in Catholic countries, among the simple-minded, and especially amongst populatious noted for an ardent imagination and inability to read. This force diminishes proportionately to the growth of intelligence and the diffusion of educational facilities; in this respect Catholicism, feeling the pressure of modern civilisation, is casting off the idolatrous skin of the middle ages. In France, for example, ever since the seventeenth century this feature of worship and of faith has fallen into desuetude, at least, amongst the partially enlightened classes. Doubtless, something still remains and will always remain, but it is an old garment becoming thinner and full of holes, and about worn out.

The second of these forces is a fixed, formal, and complete course of *metaphysics*. In this respect Catholicism is at open war with experimental science, or, at all events, with its spirit, method, and philosophy. It may perhaps shift about and compromise and remain firm on certain points, asserting, for instance, that Moses anticipated the theory of luminous ether, because he makes light born before the sun; and pretend that geological epochs are as good as indicated by the seven days of Genesis; and select its own position on unexplored grounds, in relation to complicated and difficult subjects, like spontaneous generation, cerebral functions, origin of languages, and the like; but it invincibly repudiates the doctrine which subjects every affirmation to the test of

repeated experiment and co-existing analogies, which poses as a principle the immutability of physical and moral laws, and which only reduces entities to convenient signs by which to note and to generalise facts. In short, it originated its metaphysics at a period of great mental exaltation and of unusual subtilty, when, everywhere, minds elevating triad upon triad, saw nature no longer but as an obscure stepping-stone invisible beneath lofty, interminable and magnificent stories of mystic and supernatural entities. This hostile attitude recognised, it must be remarked that scientific discoveries and their application to daily life, their encroachments on unexplored domains, their ascendency over human opinions, their influence on education and habits of thought, their dominion in the realm of speculation and of general ideas, their force, in brief, is constantly increasing. The adversary, accordingly, is falling back; Catholicism cannot, as Paganism in the times of Proclus and Porphyry, take refuge behind interpretations; it cannot discard the thing and keep its name, and declare that it penetrates to the sense beyond the symbol, for within a century critical science has been born, and we are now too familiar with the past to have it confounded with the present; when Hegel, or any other conciliating authority, presents the philosophy of the nineteenth century as the heir and interpreter of the metaphysics of the third, he may interest scholars, but he only excites the smile of historians. Catholicism, therefore, will be obliged to throw overboard its Alexandrine cargo the same as its feudal cargo; it may not cast it into the sea on account of its conservatism, but it will let it rot in the hold, or in other words, it will rarely speak of it, and cease to display it, and bring forward other parts of itself into clearer light. This is what Protestantism formerly did openly and is now doing insensibly; it rubbed off a barbarian rust under Luther, and is now,

through a modern exegesis rubbing off a Byzantine rust; after having emancipated Christianity from rites it is freeing it from dogmatic formula, and it may be asserted that even in Catholic countries most of the people in society who are orthodox on the lips, but at bottom half-Arian, half-Unitarian, somewhat deistical, somewhat sceptical, tolerably indifferent, and the feeblest of theologians, would find, if they took the trouble to examine it rigidly, a vast difference between their Catholicism and mediæval practices, between the entities of St. Sophia and those of the Serapion.

All these are dead forces, that is to say, due to an acquired momentum, and which act only through the natural inertia of human matter. The following are the active forces, that is to say, incessantly renewed by fresh impulsions. In the first place Catholicism possessed a *monarchical church*, skilfully organised and the most powerful administrative machine ever set in motion, recruiting from above, standing alone, removed from lay intervention, a kind of moral police agency which labours by the side of governments to maintain order and obedience. Under this heading, and besides as it is fundamentally ascetic, that is to say, hostile to material pleasures, it may be considered as an excellent curb to a rebellious spirit and to the cravings of the senses. This is why every society threatened with theories like socialism, or with ardent passions like those of contemporary democracy, every absolute or strongly-centralised government, sustains it in order to lean on it. The more rapid and universal the subversion of classes, the more do men's ambitions and appetites become feverish; the greater the agitation by which the lower seeks to supplant the upper strata of society, the more does the Church seem to be a salutary and protective power. The more disciplinable a people are, as in France, or inclined or

obliged, as in France and Austria, to entrust matters to external authority, the more Catholic is it. The establishment of parliamentary or republican governments, the emancipation and initiative of the individual, undoubtedly operate in a contrary sense, but it is not a sure thing that Europe is progressing towards this form of society, or at least wholly in that direction. If France remains what it has been for the last sixty years, and what it seems essentially to be, an administrative barracks well regulated and exempt from robbery, Catholicism may yet exist for an indefinite period.

The second active force is *mysticism.* Through Christ and the Virgin, through the theory and sacraments of love, Catholicism offers an aliment to all tender and dreamy imaginations, to all impassioned and unfortunate souls. On this side only has it developed itself for the last two centuries, through the adoration of the Virgin and the Sacred Heart, and quite recently in the proclamation of the latest dogma, that of the immaculate conception. The Benedictines of Solesmes, the editors of the works of St. Liguori, make startling admissions on this point.*

* Preface to the complete edition, vol. i. 1834. St. Liguori 'is a necessary link of that wonderful chain prolonged to our time by means of which for three centuries earth and heaven have drawn nearer each other . . . , Christ confides new secrets to His church; He daily instructs it in the incommensurable mysteries of His heart . . . . The hearts of the friends of God are inspired with an unction unknown to the faith of early centuries. The adoration of the spouse has become tenderer; new endearments have been revealed . . . . With Catholics the mystery of the Eucharist is a complete religion, and especially for the last six centuries has this religion of the body of Christ attained to new developments. . . . . The prerogatives of Mary, that incomparable Virgin, have been placed before us in a new light. . . . . Inheritors of her love, we who see her interposing herself like a delicate cloud and delightfully tempering the ardour of the rays of the sun of which she is the dawn, we proclaim her the all-powerful mediatress of the human species. . . . . Symbolised by the heart Christianity obtains the most perfect results from the law of grace on which it is founded. . . . In this age of mercy the precepts of the Lord consist, so to say, simply, of the

They declare that ancient theology was rigid, that the Church has received new light, that by a special revelation, she to-day brings divine goodness and mercy forward, that the dogma and sentiment of love have attained to the highest rank, that the infinite dignity overspreading the person of Mary at length provides an altar for believers at which they may delightfully pour out all the delicacies of adoration. This is feminine and sentimental poetry; add to it that of the cult; to all the fluctuations of the century, to an epoch of important dissolutions of doctrine, these two poetic agencies rally all disheartened, morbid, and enthusiastic minds. Since the fall of antique civilisation the human machine has undergone a great transformation; the primitive equilibrium of healthy races, as maintained by the gymnastic system, has wholly disappeared. Man has become more sensitive; the late and enormous increase of personal security and prosperity has only augmented his discontent and expanded his exactions and pretensions. The more man has the more he wants. Not only do his desires surpass his power to gratify them, but again the vague aspirations of his heart transcend the covetousness of his senses, the reveries of his imagination, and the curious questionings of his intellect. It is the *beyond* for which he longs, and the feverish tumult of capitals, the stimulants of literature, the exaggeration of an artificial sedentary and cerebal life, only augment the pain of his unsatisfied desire. For eighty years music and poetry have been devoted to manifesting this malady of the age, while accumulations of knowledge, overstrained labour, the vastness of effort which modern science and democracy require, seem rather designed to inflame than to heal the wound. To spirits so eager and so wearied, a charming

organic laws of love. . . . . That repulsive Jansenism appeared with its rigid morality like its dogmas, and with its dogmas as repulsive as its morality.'

quietism may sometimes seem a refuge; we recognise this in our women who have our evils without possessing our remedies. In the lower classes, among very young girls, in the void of a provincial life, it may, through the seductiveness of its worldly and coquettish poetry, and by a display of affecting corporeal symbols, win over many souls, and some day perhaps we shall see a divided family, leaving one-half of itself behind, seeking in ideal love the secret effusion, the soothing illusions, and the delightful anguish which terrestrial love does not afford it.

Such, then, is the probable and, it may be said, the present transformation of Catholicism. To diminish its rites save for the simple, to let its metaphysics decline save in its schools, to bind together its administrative hierarchy, and to develope its sentimental doctrines, is what it has been concerned with since the Council of Trent. It seems as if its special business for the future was to address itself to governments and to women, to become repressive and mystical, to form leagues and to found 'sacred hearts,' to be a political party and an asylum for the morbid. As the progress of the positive sciences and the condition of industrial well-being check the exaltation necessary to the establishment of a new religion one can see no limit to its duration; never has a people abandoned its own religion except for one of a different character. Only one grand crisis for it can be detected on the horizon, and that in a century or two, namely, the intervention of the new Protestantism. That of Luther and Calvin, so rigid and literal, is repugnant to the Latin races; that of Schleiermacher and Bunsen, softened and transformed by a new exegesis, accommodated to the demands of science and civilisation, indefinitely expanded and purified, may become *par excellence* a moral, liberal, and philosophic religion, and win over even in Latin countries that superior class which, under

Voltaire and Rousseau adopted deism. If this battle is fought it will be one worthy of attention, for, between a philosophy and a religion it could not occur, each of these two plants having an independent and indestructible root; but between two religions it would be another thing. Should Catholicism resist this attack, it seems to me that henceforth it will be safe from all others. Always will the difficulty of governing democracies secure it partisans; always will the silent sufferings of the sad and the tender provide it with recruits; always will the antiquity of possession preserve to it its faithful believers. These are its three roots, and experimental science does not reach them, for they are composed, not of science, but of sentiments and yearnings. They may be more or less ramified and more or less profound, but it does not seem that the modern spirit has any hold on them: on the contrary, in many minds and in certain countries the modern spirit introduces emotions and institutions which react on and consolidate them, and one day Macaulay declared in a sudden outburst of imaginative eloquence that Catholicism will subsist in South America, for example, when tourists from Australia will explore the ruins of Paris and London, to sketch the dismantled arches of London Bridge or the crumbled walls of the Pantheon.

CHAPTER VII.

HOLY WEEK—PALM SUNDAY—ST. PETER'S—THE MISERERE AT THE SISTINE CHAPEL—PALESTRINA—THE PAULINE CHAPEL.

Palm Sunday.—For the last eight days the half of our time has been passed in St. Peter's. We witness a ceremony and then sit down outside on the steps; the square enclosed within its colonnade, spotted with moving human specks and traversed with silent processions, is of itself a spectacle. On the square in the beautiful broad sunlight, between glittering fountains, processions advance, monks in violet, red, and black cowls, pupils of the seminaries, a mixed crowd of visitors, women in black veils, and soldiers, all intermingled and heaving like waves. The carriages of the *monsignori* arrive one by one, with a decoration of liveried coachmen and lackeys; three stand behind, of which number two hang on the vehicle and the third hangs on to them. These domestics are quite important characters: look at them in the pictures of Heilbuth, consequential and tranquil, wearing old-looking new clothes, and new-looking old clothes, semi-beadle, semi-lackey, aware that they are brushing the cassock of a possible Pope, and that they are nearer heaven than other men, believing themselves tinctured with holiness and nevertheless looking closely to economies. As to the prelates their faces are full of finesse— not of that Parisian finesse which consists in a subtle and elegant wit, but an ecclesiastical and Italian finesse belonging to diplomates

and advocates, that of people accustomed to self-control, to wily reserve, and non-committalism. Peasants lie sleeping on the steps, but it does not answer to approach too near them, as your nose warns you; they have never washed themselves, and smell of the wild animal. All around on the balconies and on the doorsteps you perceive numbers of Roman grisettes, with their wavy black hair tastefully gathered up, and with regular well-defined features, the lips finely cut, the chin strong and eyes fixed. Sometimes one of these beautiful redoutable heads shows itself from a miserable dirty window; you observe it there in the morning and again in the afternoon, the day having thus been passed in seeing and being seen.

To a person of a religious temperament the spectacle in the interior of St. Peter's is not edifying. The soldiers of the papal guard yawn and turn round to ogle the women that pass them. During the mass the officiating parties circulate about talking in whispers or in a low voice, and as there are no benches or chairs to sit on, they try to support themselves against the columns, now resting on one foot, now on the other, and some of them going to sleep. You hear everywhere a continuous roar, a coming and going as in a public hall. You stretch yourself on tiptoe to see the Pope's Swiss guard pass wearing ruffs and motley costumes, and carrying the halberds of the sixteenth century; and next the apparitors, in black velvet doublets and Spanish cloaks, with gold chains, and the ruff also of the time of Philip II. At length the procession starts: every figure in white represents an apostle and holds a wand enwreathed with yellow, figuring a palm branch; others are in black, violet, and red, the bishops, the last of all, glittering in their damask copes; many of them are smiling, talking, and carelessly looking about them. In the background, behind the great *baldachino*, you obtain glimpses of genuflexions and postures, the remnants of

ancient symbolic ceremonies so little appropriate to present times. On the sides, in two vast balconies, stand women dressed in black, wearing black veils with a 'Murray,' and an opera-glass in their hands. Complaints are heard of the incompleteness of the ceremony. The Pope has been attacked with erysipelas, and which, being opened, has discharged a good deal of water, and it is not certain that he can officiate at Easter;—the medical details are related with considerable minuteness. Nobody expresses genuine interest or sympathy; all that concerns the public is the loss of the principal actor whose absence impairs the effect of the representation. People converse and accost each other, and promenade as in the *foyer* of the opera. And this is all that remains of the glorious pompous ceremonies of the times of Pope Boniface VIII. which attracted pilgrims by hundreds of thousands: nothing but a decoration that is a decoration no longer, an empty ceremonial, an object for archæologists to study, a picture for artists, a curiosity for idlers, a mass of rites to which every century has contributed something, similar to the city itself where living faith and the spontaneous emotion of the heart find no longer corresponding objects, but where painters, antiquaries, and tourists congregate.

From a picturesque point of view the effect is quite otherwise. Thus filled and measured by the crowd the church becomes colossal; the moving, waving swarm of people gives it the animation of a painting. The light streaming in from the dome amidst all this marble seems to be a shower of rays of dazzling splendour. The great *baldachino* sending up its dark spiral columns amongst clouds of incense, the vague harmony of the music softened by distance, the magnificence of marbles and of decorations, the crowds of statues apparently moving in the shadowy indistinctness, the assemblage and concord of so many monumental forms and grand round lines, all

contribute to render it a fête, a song of triumph and of rejoicing. I should like to hear the Prayer from Rossini's *Moïse* sung here by three hundred voices, accompanied by a suitable orchestra.

The Miserere at the Sistine chapel.—Myself and every other man standing for three hours. The first two hours pass and many, able to stand no longer, withdraw. Bodies are jammed together as if in a vice. Faces, too, are so red and yellow and wrinkled that you are reminded of the damned in Michael Angelo's fresco. Your feet and calves, and loins all seem to collapse. Fortunate are those who find a column to lean against! Several strive to get at their handkerchiefs to wipe off the perspiration from their foreheads, while others fruitlessly try to raise their hats. You can see nothing but a forest of heads. The crowd push against the door, and now and then some official bursts through painfully making his way, thanks to the shoulders of the acolytes, like an iron wedge penetrating a piece of wood. Under the tribunes at the entrance, in a sort of cage, the ladies are seated on their heels, breathing aromatic vinegar. Here and there a Swiss guard in white plumes and fancy costume turns his broad feet to account and props himself up on his halberd. Meanwhile the monotonous drone of the psalms continues.

This does not prevent Michael Angelo's figures from appearing like giants and heroes. Oh, if I could only throw myself on my back to look at those prophets! What valiant trunks, what magnificent primitive bodies, those of Adam and Eve! And that terrible figure of Christ the judge! What an avenging Apollo, what a sublime Jupiter the Thunderer! With what an air of a victorious combatant does he assail the figures of his falling enemies. Everything here is derived from the antique. When Bramante conceived St. Peter's he

borrowed his two ideas from the Pantheon and the Basilica of Constantine. The two ages meet.

At length comes the *Kyrie* and then the *Miserere.* This is worth all the pains in the knees and loins one suffers in order to hear it. It is a remarkably strange production; there are prolonged chords in it which seem false, and which affect the ear with a sensation analogous to that of an acid fruit in the mouth. There is no pure melody or rhythmic chant; it consists of a commingling and conflict of tones, long strains, and vague plaintive voices resembling those of an Æolian harp, or the shrill lamentations of the wind through trees and other innumerable mournful and sweet sounds of nature. Nothing can be grander and more original; the musical age which produced such a mass is separated from ours by an immense gulf. This music is unlimited in its tenderness and resignation, being much more sad than any modern production; it issues from a religious and delicate soul; it might have been written in some convent lost in the depths of a solitude, after long and vague reveries amongst the whisperings and sighings of the wind weeping in melodies around the rocks. I must not fail to hear the *Miserere* of to-morrow. One is by Palestrina and the other by Allegri. What a fund of strange profound sentiments! Such is the music of the Catholic restoration as the new spirit developed it on reconstructing the middle ages.

Thursday.—Yesterday and to-day I have been looking over the two volumes by Baïni on Palestrina. He was a pious man, a friend of St. Philip of Neri, the son of poor parents, poor during his whole life, living on a pension of six and afterwards nine crowns a month, always in want of money to publish his works, unfortunate and of tender feelings, having lost three sons of the greatest promise and writing his *lamentations* in the midst of a keen and prolonged chagrin. At this epoch, under him

and Goudimel his master, music, half a century after the other arts, issues from the slough of the middle ages. The sacred chant had become incrusted with scholastic rust, and overlain with every kind of difficulty, complication, and extravagance; the notes when referring to fields and herbage being green, red when treating of blood and sacrifices, and black when the text mentions death and the grave, each party singing different words, and frequently songs of a worldly type. The composer selected a gay or licentious air—'*l'Homme armé*,' or '*l'Ami Baudichon, madame*'; and with this, through the many subtleties and vagaries of counterpoint, composed a mass. Pedantry and license, the mechanical regimen of the middle ages, had degraded and confused the mind in music as in literature, and produced poets in the fifteenth century as affected and insipid as its musicians.* The religious sentiment reappeared, protestant with Luther and catholic with the Council of Trent. Among the protestants, Goudimel, a martyr of St. Bartholemew, gave the music of the heroic hymns of the stake and the battle-field; among the Catholics, Palestrina, invited by the Pope, gave the vague and vast harmonies of the mystic desolation and supplications of an entire people, infantile and melancholy, prostrate beneath the hand of God.

These two *Miserere* are above and perhaps beyond all music to which I ever listened; previous to acquaintance with these one could only imagine such sweetness and melancholy, such strangeness and sublimity. Three points are very striking:—discords abound sometimes so as to produce what in ears like ours, accustomed to agreeable sensations, we call false votes;—the parts are multiplied in an extraordinary degree, so that the same

* See Lydgate, Occleve, Hawes in England, Brandt in Germany, Charles of Orleans, and the poesy of Froissard in France.

chord contains three or four harmonies and two or three discords, all constantly decomposed and recomposed in its various portions; some voice at every instant is heard detaching itself through its own theme, the aggregate number being so well distributed that the harmony seems an effect of chance, like the low and intermittent concert of rural harmonies;— the continuous tone is that of a plaintive ecstatic prayer, ever persistent, or unweariedly recurring without regard to symmetrical chant or ordinary rhythm; an indefatigable aspiration of the suffering heart which can and will find rest only in God, the ever-renewed yearnings of captive spirits sinking to their native dust through their own burden, the prolonged sighs of an infinite number of loving, tender, unhappy souls, never discouraged in adoring and in worshipping.

The spectacle is as admirable for the eye as for the ear. Tapers are extinguished one by one, the vestibule grows dark, the grand figures of the frescoes move obscurely in shadow. You advance a few paces, and stand before the Pauline chapel, radiant like the paradise of angels, with halos, lights, and incense. Story upon story of tapers ascend above the altar like a glorious shrine, while lustres descend expanding their gilded arabesques, their fountains of sparks, their glittering splendour, and their diamond plumes like the mystic birds of Dante. Scales of jet flood the sanctuary with flashing brightness, and the twining columns wind their blue spiral shafts up among the charming forms of angels, surrounded by rolling clouds of incense and an atmosphere of exquisite perfumes. All the dazzling and fairy-like splendour of this delicious fête is the work of Bernini; his Saint Theresa of the Chiesa della Vittoria contemplates all this in her swoon, and it is here that she ought to be.

Meanwhile, in St. Peter's, between two files of soldiery, you see a procession advancing to perform the ceremony

of washing the feet. First come the *monsignori*, with their *spirituelle* physiognomies, then the cardinals in purple, with red hats in their hands, followed by their acolytes, then chanoines dressed in bright red, and finally the twelve apostles in blue, wearing a singular white hat and carrying a bouquet in their hands. Elsewhere in a hospital are Roman ladies in black robes, and in the white aprons of nuns doing the same service. Here three or four hundred peasants are received for the fête; ladies of the highest rank, princesses, wash their feet, clothe them, feed them, and put them to bed. This furnishes an outlet for the violent and intermittent desire for Christian emotion and humiliation.

CHAPTER VIII.

GOOD FRIDAY—THE PAPACY IN ST. PETER'S—THE TOMBS OF THE POPES—EASTER SUNDAY—CEREMONY—THE POPE—THE AUDIENCE—PEASANTS—THE PAST AND FUTURE OF ITALY.

Good Friday.—A third Miserere, a little inferior to the preceding, and, again to-day the Pauline chapel without its illuminations, is ridiculous; you discover that the blue columns and most of its gilding is simply deception. Michaël Angelo's last two frescoes, 'The Crucifixion of St. Peter' and 'St. Paul stricken to the ground' are only technically admirable.

In the basilica of St. Peter a cardinal with two red caps is seated five steps, above the floor, on a carved chair of dark wood and holding in his hand a long wand with which he touches the skulls of kneeling penitents: the touch gives special indulgences. The cardinal is sixty years of age, big and dressed in purple, and his gravity is admirable; not a muscle of his face stirs; he might be taken for a majestic hieratic Bouddha. From time to time a file of black capuchins pass, and one stops to contemplate among these hooded inquisitors this or that cardinal with a long yellow face and black penetrating eyes, a sort of Ximenes without position. The crowd around presses here and there, and waves like the billows: but the church is so vast that conversations and the shuffling of feet are deadened and swallowed up in one vast murmur.

This visit of to-day is perhaps one of my last; I will

try to review the *ensemble* of the edifice. By degrees the eye becomes accustomed to it; you take the work for what it is, such as its founders conceived it; you do not regard it as a Christian but as an artist. It is no longer a church, but a monument, and from this point of view is assuredly one of man's masterpieces.

The Sistine stairway with its garlanded arch and the long development of its descent is incomparably noble and well proportioned. St. Peter's is similar to it, ornate without being overcharged, grand without enormity, and majestic without being overwhelming. You enjoy the simple rotundity of the arches and cupola, their amplitude and solidity, their richness and their strength. These gilded compartments that border the great vault, those marble angels seated on its curves, that superb *baldachino* of bronze supported by its spiral columns, those pompous mausoleums of the Popes, form altogether a unique combination; never was there a more magnificent pagan fete offered to a Christian God.

What is the God of this temple? At the back of the apsis, above the altar, on the spot ordinarily appropriated to the Virgin or to Christ, is the chair of St. Peter; it is this which is the patron and sovereign of the place. Official terms complete its meaning; the Pope is called *His Holiness, The Blessed Father*; they appear to regard him as already in paradise.

Almost all the mausoleums of the Popes are imposing, and especially that of Paul III. by Della Porta. Two figures of Virtues, half-reclining on his tomb, display their beautiful forms in bold attitudes; the elder dreams with proud, superb gravity; the younger has the rich beauty, the sensual and *spirituelle* head, the waving tresses, and the delicate ear of the Venetian figures. She was once almost nude, but has since been draped; this passage of the sculpture of nature to the sculpture of

decency marks the change which separates the Renaissance from Jesuitism.*

I do not know why Stendhal so highly praises the mausoleum of Clement III. by Canova; its figures are like those by Girodet or Guerin, insipid or attitudinising. In this respect, recent tombs are instructive. The more a monument approaches our time the more do its statues assume a spiritualistic and pensive expression; the head usurps all the attention; the body is reduced, veiled, and becomes accessory and insignificant.

For example, consider in turn the tomb of Benedict XIV. who died in the last century, and by its side the mausoleums of Pius VII. and Gregory XVI; on the former are seated or in action beautiful female figures, still healthy and strong, well posed and animated; on the other two the Virtues consist of carefully rasped, draped, and interesting skeletons. We shall finally end in no longer appreciating form or substance, but simply spirit and expression.

Easter Sunday.—The weather has changed for the worse, the rain falls in sudden showers; but the crowd is spread all over, in the square, on the staircases, in the porticoes, engulphing itself with a prolonged murmur in the immensity of the basilica.

In this human ocean the slow undulating billows gradually form and break; before the statue of St. Peter the flood advances and recedes under the reflux of preceding waves. Pushing and crowding every moment augments or decreases the disorderly movement of this mass; a tumultuous and noisy confusion of steps, of rustling robes, and of words rumbling among the grand walls, while aloft, above this agitation and murmur, one

* The complaints of a celebrated French Catholic have lately led to a recrudescence of modesty; 35000 francs have been laid out in sheet-iron shirts for the angels and saints.

perceives the peaceful vaulted spaces, the luminous void of the domes and the stories of borderings, ornaments, and statues superposed one above another and filling the winding abyss of the cupola.

In this sea of bodies and heads a double dyke of soldiers, chanters, and choir-boys form a bed in which flows the solemn and pompous retinue; first are the *garda nobile*, red and black and wearing casques; then red chamberlains; farther on prelates in purple, then masters of ceremonies in *pourpoints* and black mantles, after these the cardinals, and last the sovereign pontiff borne by acolytes in a chair of red velvet embroidered with gold, wearing a long white robe worked with gold, and on his head the triple golden tiara. Fans of the plumes of ostriches wave around him. He has a benevolent, affectionate expression; his fine pale countenance is that of an invalid; you think with regret how much he must suffer just at this moment with his leg wrapped in bandages. The benediction is quietly given with a gentle smile.

The soldiers and the chanters were talking gaily an instant before his passage; a moment after a trumpet in the apsis plays an operatic air, and two or three of the soldiers begin to hum, keeping time in harmony; but the people, the peasants, look as if they were gazing on God the Father. You ought to see their faces and those especially around the statue of St. Peter. They flock around it by turns, almost stifling themselves in order to kiss its bronze foot, now nearly worn away; they caress it, pressing their brows against it; many of them have come on foot from a distance of ten or twelve miles ignorant of where they are to pass the night. Some, rendered drowsy by the change of air, sleep standing against a pilaster, and their wives push them with their elbows. Several possess the Roman heads of the statues, the low brow, angular features, hard and sombre expression; others

the regular visage, ample beard, warm glowing colour, and naturally crisp locks visible in paintings of the Renaissance epoch. You could not imagine a more vigorous and more uncultivated race. They wear a strange costume—old sheep or goat skin mantles, leather leggings, blue vests a hundred times soaked with rain, and sandals of hide as in primitive times; the odour from all this is insupportable. Their eyes are fixed and as brilliant as those of an animal; still more brilliant than these and more wild glow those of the women, yellow and sunken through fever. They resort here impelled by a vague sentiment of fear similar to that of the ancient Latins, in order not to provoke an unknown and dangerous power that might visit upon them at will a pestilence or tornado, and they kiss the toe of the statue as seriously as an Asiatic bringing a tribute to a pacha.

The reverberation of the mass is heard half lost in the distance, and the grand forms shrouded in incense add their nobleness and gravity to its mysterious harmony. What a mighty lord, what a splendid idol, the master of this church is to these peasants! In order to comprehend the impression which all this splendour, all these marbles and gilding make on their minds, think of their smoky hovels, their desolate campagna—of their rugged fire-wracked mountains and black lakes, of the stifling heat of their feverish summers, of the mute uneasy dreams swarming through the brains of shepherds during lonely hours or when night, with its retinue of lugubrious forms, has weighed them down upon the plain! A lurid sky like that of yesterday, afar on the livid plain, and the gloomy vapour, make one shudder. The implacable midday sun in a rocky hollow or near the putrefaction of a marsh, gives one a vertigo. We know by the ancient Romans what a hold superstition had on man among these stagnant pools, these sulphurous wastes, these shattered mountains,

and these metallic lakes, and the peasants we now see have no healthier or more cultivated or more collected minds than the soldiers of Papirius.

The crowd pass out and await the Pope, who is to appear on the grand balcony of St. Peter's and bestow the benediction. The rain increases, and as far as the eye can see on the plazza, in the street, and on the terraces, the multitude swarms and is heaped up,—cavalry, infantry, carriages, pedestrians under umbrellas, with peasants dripping under their sheepskin coverings. They herd together by families, gaze, and eat their lupines; that which astonishes them the most is the uniforms and the long columns of French troops. Their children, in sheepskins and clinging to the pillars, seem to be a troop of wild colts.

The balcony remains empty; the Pope is too ill and unable to finish the ceremony. The crowd disperses in the rain and in the mud. As the people say, the Pope is decidedly *jettatore*; we have this bad weather because he could only accomplish the half of the ceremony.

Here, after fourteen centuries is the *finale* of Roman pomp, for it is veritably the ancient Roman empire which here lives and still endures. It sunk into the earth under the heavy blows of the barbarians, but with the universal rejuvenescence it reappeared in a new form, a spiritual and no longer a temporal form. The entire history of Italy is contained foreshortened, in a single word—it has remained too *Latin*. The Heruli, the Ostrogoths, the Lombards, the Franks did not plant themselves well, or did not sufficiently dominate; she was not Germanised like the rest of Europe, she found herself in the tenth century about as she was three hundred years before Christ, municipal and not feudal, ignorant of that vassal fidelity and that soldier's honour which fashioned the great states and peaceful communities of modern times, surren-

dered like antique cities to mutual hatred, to intestine commotion, to republican seditions, to local tyrannies, to the right of force, and hence to the reign of private violence, to oblivion of a military spirit, and to the ways of the assassin. When a central power threatened to establish itself the Pope stirred up the municipal forces against it; Lombards, Hohenstaufen of the north, Hohenstaufen of the south, he destroyed them all; the spiritual sovereign could not tolerate a great lay monarch by his side, and in order to remain independent he prevented the nation from organising. This is why in the sixteenth century whilst, throughout Europe, society, expanded and transformed, modelled and raised up regular monarchies side by side with each other, supported by the courage of subjects, and organising governments upheld by the practice of justice, Italy, divided into petty tyrannies and parcelled into feeble republics, debased in its morals and emasculated in its instincts, found itself shut up within the narrow bounds of antique civilisation under the impotent patronage of a spiritual Cæsar who had prevented her union without being capable of protecting her. She was invaded, pillaged, dismembered, and sold. In this world whoever is feeble becomes the prey of others; he who to-day neglects to manufacture rifled cannon and ironclads will to-morrow be protected and spared, the day after, a stepping-stone to tramp over, and the day after that a booty to be consumed. If Italy for three centuries subsided into decay and servitude it is because she did not repudiate municipal and Roman traditions. She is casting them off at this moment; she comprehends that in order to maintain herself erect by the side of great military monarchies, she herself must become a great military monarchy; that the old Latin system has produced and prolonged her weakness; that in the world as it now is, an assemblage of petty States, blessed and manœuvred by a cosmopolite prince,

belongs to its powerful neighbours desirous of making use of it or of taking possession of it. She recognises that the two prerogatives which constitute her pride are the two sources whence flow her misery; that municipal independence and pontifical sovereignty, emancipative in the middle ages, are pernicious in modern times; that the institutions which protected her against the invaders of the thirteenth century delivered her over to the invaders of the nineteenth; that if she no longer desires to remain a promenade for the idle, a spectacle for the curious, a seminary of chanters, a *salon* for *sigisbés*, an antichamber for parasites, she must become an army of soldiers, a corporation of manufacturers, a laboratory for savants, and a people of labourers. In this transformation, so vast, she finds her stimulus in the souvenir of past evils and in the contagion of European civilisation. And this is much: is it sufficient?

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